# Testifyings and Pleadings

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# Testifyings & Pleadings

in Application of
the Teachings of S. Paul
to the state and needs
of the Congregation
in this year
of Grace

"My *ways* which be in CHRIST, as I teach everywhere and in every Church."—*S. Paul.*

BY

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London:
SKEFFINGTON & SON, PICCADILLY, W.
PUBLISHERS TO HIS MAJESTY THE KING.
1901.

# Note.

THESE INSTRUCTIONS owe whatever unity they have not to any thought of their appearing in print, nor to their having been given in any consecutive order; but solely to a deep and ever deepening sense of need, on the part of the Congregation, of realisation of what is S. Paul's teaching: more particularly in respect of one great matter, that, namely, which is shown of GOD's People of old and held forth to us for our instruction by CHRIST's Apostles, of *all standing in Grace while not all received the prize.* For the rest there is diversity—the above shown in divers ways. Hence there is repetition: if not in words, nor in mode or manner, yet in substance wherein the same thing is shown

and again shown. Repetition, to some wearisome, is to others needful: truth has many approaches, and has many sides. Some readers are impressed by one showing, some by another; some by number—each one carrying weight; all by the aggregate—a harmony of parts conjointly bearing the same witness, and in no instance found wanting or unconformable.

North Grimston Vicarage, York.

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I.

# The "Ways which be in Christ."

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth: Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—S. Matt. xxviii. 18, 19.

STANDING on the Southern slope of the Himalaya we should have stretched out before us, far as the eye could reach, the great plain of Hindostan; ancient cities, towns, and villages in long lines and clusters we should mark as the abodes of men—they an almost innumerable multitude. Many a mosque we should see with its glittering dome, and many an idol temple; and, of the Hindoo population, not a dwelling, not even a chamber of reeds which is without its idol. Looking beneath the surface, as with the knowledge which has come to us we are permitted to do, we should see the native faiths, from a variety of contributory causes, undermined, breaking up, and ready to pass away; as surely as were

the faiths of ancient Greece and Rome with all their idol worship, at the dawn of the Christian era.

If now we may picture this as being the scene of the SAVIOUR'S memorable words, "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white all ready to harvest," we shall be struck with the force of their application. If, further, we may imagine this present time as being the time when, richly dowered, the Apostles, sent on their Divine errand, go forth to assert the claims of CHRIST, and to take over the kingdoms for Him, we shall know exactly what course theirs will be, and what will be their methods.

I have transferred this in a figure to India for your sakes, that on this new ground and in this new setting, of events and their circumstances (become perhaps only too familiar), you may learn afresh what is indeed most needful that you should rightly know: and to many, who have never read the Scriptures of the New Testament save with other peoples' eyes, or with pre-possessions which turn aside the points of their meaning, there will be many surprises.

"Go ye," the SAVIOUR said, "and disciple all the nations, baptising them in the Name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST": and the first promise in the Kingdom of Grace is, "He that believeth and is baptised

shall be saved." Is it no surprise for those who make little of Baptism, who do not include it in the terms of Salvation as re-delivered by their mouth, who postpone its requirement indefinitely, or who exclude it altogether from their practice—is it no surprise, I say, that the SAVIOUR of the world should put it on the same footing as faith, should require it concurrently with teaching or discipling, and He the Inbringer of a reputedly purely spiritual Dispensation? It is a surprise felt, ill-concealed, and sometimes confessed. This may pass; yet let it be borne in mind.

Acting on a command so Divine, unquestioned and unquestionable, the Apostles preach to the multitude assembled on the occasion of one of their great yearly Festivals: being pricked in the heart, many ask, "Men, brethren, what shall we do?" "Repent and be baptised," is the ready and sufficient answer; and the same day there are added unto them three thousand souls. Who are these three thousand? Not heathens, truly (neither Jews nor Moslems are heathens; neither Jews nor Moslems are idolaters): but men of imperfect faith in the One True GOD; men of imperfect knowledge, knowing JESUS only as "a man approved of GOD by miracles and wonders and signs, which GOD did by him." The same, hearing S. Peter preach, "received the word gladly," and were baptised to the number of about

three thousand. Such was their *Conversion*. I want you to mark this. This which took place on that First Day of the Church is commonly viewed as being something exceptional. There is nothing in the text of Holy Scripture which indicates it—nothing which shows that the HOLY GHOST came on them otherwise than as on men now, turning them to the LORD; there is that in the text which excludes any such supposition, "Repent and be baptised every one of you in the Name of JESUS CHRIST for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the HOLY GHOST." These Jews and proselytes were not otherwise prepared to receive the gift than as men are prepared now, find them where we may; nor did they otherwise receive it. Their preparation and sole title was that of "receiving the word gladly" —that admits to Baptism, and Baptism into the Kingdom of Heaven. See this, further: a Eunuch in high trust under Candace, Queen of the Ethiopians, was returning from Jerusalem. This man was a devout proselyte. Philip having preached CHRIST unto him, the man made his avowal of faith, "I believe that JESUS is the SON of GOD," and coming upon water, Philip took him and baptised him straightway. Such was his conversion to the faith of CHRIST; such was his admission into the Kingdom of Heaven. It is the reflex, in a single instance, as the other was

in the case of a multitude, of the SAVIOUR'S word, "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved."

We could not well read these into India (though our lesson is beginning to appear); but there are cases to follow which have no such restriction, and one principle governs them all. A Gentile Heathen awoke in great fear in the dead of night: the prisoners committed to his charge were escaping—so he thought, and well he knew the dread penalty, and would have made his escape from it, when Paul called out, "Do thyself no harm, for we are all here"; and took instant opportunity—he preached unto him JESUS. He who would hastily have killed himself, as hastily received the faith; and as hastily the Apostle took him and baptised him: nor him only, but his slaves if he had any, his children if he had any, even "all that were in his house." It is a surprising history; not a bit like what would be done now by those who do not accept with us the Apostolic doctrine. Other households were treated in the like manner, and those not one nor two: they show *a practice*, which was the practice of the Apostles. I want you particularly to mark the salient points as we go along. What they did in the case of the Jews partially instructed, they did in the case of the Gentiles with no instruction at all, save only such as could be given at the moment; what they did to the heathen masters,

they did to their heathen slaves as well. Coming on certain at Ephesus, John's disciples, yet so ignorant that they had "not so much as heard whether there be any HOLY GHOST," the Apostle supplied what was lacking in their faith and at once baptised them. Coming on certain in Lycaonia, who as heathen were about to do sacrifice, he preached to them "that they should turn from these vanities unto the Living GOD." Such, and no other was their *Conversion*, in all them who received the word. The salient points are these: The Apostles required no other faith of the Jews, than their believing that JESUS was the CHRIST; they required no other faith of the Gentiles, than their believing that JESUS was the SON of GOD. Such always was *saving faith*. The Apostles required no other conversion of the heathen, than their turning from their idols to serve the Living and True GOD; they required no other conversion of the Jews, than their turning from Moses unto CHRIST, of Whom Moses spake. Such always was *Conversion* in the Apostles' use of the word. This simplifies these great words in a very helpful manner. But there is more: Jews and Heathen, masters and slaves, pass into the Kingdom of Heaven by Baptism, and receive remission of sins and the promise of the HOLY GHOST; and at once are of the number of those "that are being saved"—accounted, and taught

to account themselves, *children of* GOD *in* CHRIST. These men were not renewed in heart; they were not Christianly instructed; they were not proved by a long probation; they were not leading holy and Christian lives — *down to the hour of their Baptism*, they were walking even as other Gentiles walked in the vanity of their minds; but, receiving the word gladly, the word the Apostles preached, they were baptised straightway, and added unto the number of those "that were being saved." It is a strange account; to many it is a strange account.

We have now to ask for the clue to a practice to many so unfamiliar. It is a very simple matter: the Apostles, being Apostles of CHRIST and knowing no other master, simply acted on the word of their Master — "Make disciples of all the nations"; believing in Me, baptise them; "he that believeth and is baptised shall be saved." This first. But this is scarcely the full explanation. The fact is, the Apostles regarded the Church as a hospital, wherein the spiritually sick may gain health; and as a school and gymnasium, where they may acquire the knowledge and practice of all the Christian virtues: and not as a guest-chamber, where all are holy and clean, awaiting only the call to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Taking up the work their Master had sent them

to do 45 degrees further East, *i.e.* in Asia Major rather than in Asia Minor, they would now find "the nations" in essentially the same condition; to be gathered in by precisely the same methods. They would again find a people claiming descent from Abraham—through Ishmael rather than Isaac—with some knowledge of GOD, but truly "a stiff-necked people," "uncircumcised in heart and ears"; and besides these, "the nations" now as then "wholly given to idolatry." To these latter, they would preach—as they preached in Lycaonia—that they should turn from these vanities to serve the Living and True GOD. To all they would preach JESUS, the Anointed of GOD, chosen and precious; and as many as believed, as many as received the word, whether of one or of the other, they would—without any further requirement made—admit by Baptism into the Kingdom of Heaven. Do you ask me how this knowledge is mine? I reply, *this is what they did:* in Rome, in Corinth, no less than in Judæa, in Crete and in all the islands of the Sea, whithersoever they went—the deduction is irresistible. These—Brahmins, Bhuddists, Moslems, Parsees or any other, whether of high or of low degree—so admitted on their faith in CHRIST into the Kingdom of GOD, they would call "saved," "added to the LORD," "added to the Church"; members in full standing. The thing is so start-

ling that it perhaps cannot be said without being met with a smile of incredulity. The surprise arises out of the departure from the Apostles' principles, faith, and practice, which has grown up, and with which we are familiarised. 'The Church consists of all holy persons—holy in heart and life; who know their blessings in CHRIST by a happy experience, and have a delight in them: none others *can* be members.'—So we are told; so we read, again and again. It is clean contrary to the very first idea of the Apostles, and cannot be held along with the teaching of any one of S. Paul's Epistles. The Apostles took men when they were without strength, without knowledge, without goodness of any sort, and added them to the Church—added them for the very *purpose* of their acquiring these graces and all good things. So does S. Peter say, speaking to men so baptised, "Add to your faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly-kindness, charity." It is a wonderful list. The teaching commonly received is that he who 'believes' has all these things already; the Apostle's teaching is that he has need to *add* them to his faith, every one of them. The teaching commonly received is that he who has not these things in him, is not yet in CHRIST at all; the Apostles' teaching is different altogether. The Apostles said of those, who believing the word were baptised, that "the LORD

added to the Church daily such as were (in process of) being saved": they said further, that they were to work out their salvation with fear and trembling, that they were to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure. This is putting another face on it: this is just what *could* be said, and what would *have* to be said of all—natives of India or not—as many of them as gladly received the word and were thereupon baptised.

There is something further to be said: Having got a Church in India, many congregations—Bhuddists and Brahmins, that were, Moslems and Parsees, some apart, and some mixed together, the Apostle would go in and out among them, teaching and exhorting in all patience and with all authority; correcting abuses, charging them, rebuking them, showing them the good and the right way, and requiring all to walk therein. This, evidently, is just what would *have* to be done. Old habits would yet be strong upon these new converts; social usages, in a people who only yesterday were heathens, would sometimes draw them aside; other and false teachers would beguile them. We know it, for just *so it was*. "The care of all the Churches" would thus be, manifestly, an anxious care. Yet how would he regard them—these his converts? He would regard them as being all "in CHRIST," and as having "put on

CHRIST" "as many as were baptised." And how would he address them? He would address them all as being in CHRIST—"babes in CHRIST"; though he "could not speak unto them as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal." He would address them all as "holy and beloved"—how *holy?* Holy as a temple is holy. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of GOD," and that "the temple of GOD is holy, which temple ye are?" That is, they were consecrated to GOD even as a temple is consecrated—all "holy to the LORD," set apart, holy to His service. He would do this while rebuking them for their sin.

How do I know? I know it because he *did* so. He would never tell them, or such of them as walked unworthily, that they had yet to be converted. The Apostle never told any who had been by Baptism admitted into the Church that they had to be converted: he told them they were "*in CHRIST*," and therefore charged them that they "put off the old man with his deeds," and that they "put on the new man which after GOD is created in righteousness and true holiness." "As ye have received CHRIST JESUS the LORD, so walk ye in Him." Such was the teaching in Asia Minor, among nations and peoples which only yesterday were idolaters; such therefore would it be in Asia Major. I am not concerned to question the rightness of present practice, that followed by

Missionaries of our own time, in subjecting all who receive the word to a long course of preparation: holding them back, and baptising them into the Kingdom of Heaven only when, by their evidently staunch character, they have given hostages for their future good conduct.

I am only showing of the Apostles, what *was*, and as judged by what was, what *would be* their practice: that, thereby we may see, as in a glass, that the present practice of allowing neither the name nor the reality to things, except they appear in the more matured forms, is clean contrary to Apostolic principles and Apostolic methods of action. Faith, Conversion, these (as well as other things) have been so inflated and overwrought that our churches to-day are half-filled, and more than half-filled, by those who are counted unconverted and unbelievers! The description of 'Who is a Christian' is of one who stands on the topmost rung of the ladder, so that few feel—or *ought* to feel—that they answer to the description; and are thus excluded from being, or counting themselves as being, of the number! The Apostles, on the contrary, gave to the first beginnings the same promise as belongs to them in their further and more perfect forms, and called them by the same names. They had regard to the "babes in CHRIST," to their "little children," and to the day of small things. They had faith in the Gift

and the Grace of God—that with due care given and taken, it would increase unto more and more. And in the larger faith, and the larger hope, they committed all to the goodness of God, and to the Day which will show every man's work of what sort it is.

## II.

# A Return to our Teachers.

"Be ye followers of me, even as also I am of Christ."—1 Cor. xi. 1.

I COULD wish that the chasm of Eighteen hundred years which separates us in time from the Apostles of the Lord could be bridged over, if only for *a single day*. I could wish it much for your sakes. Not because the grace of God was greater then than it is now; not because it was more surely conveyed and made over in the channels of grace which Christ ordained: but because your faith would then stand in the ordered ways of blessing, and be more operative—you would not, in that case, be let and hindered by divers and strange doctrines which in the interval have grown up and now arrest progress.

If by to-morrow's noon you could pass over to the hearing of him who was the Lord's chosen Apostle to us Gentiles, in your natural condition as Gentiles, his word would come to you with power, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,

and thou shalt be saved." If, having such knowledge and faith in CHRIST as you make confession of in the Creed, "I believe that JESUS CHRIST is the SON of GOD," you were to approach him with inquiry further, "What must we do?" his word, instant, would be, "Repent and be baptised every one of you for the remission of sins." And thus, *all* of you who have will and desire would be rejoicing Christians before night-fall.

You would not then be, as now you are, fully one half of you, *in doubt* as to Grace and Calling, holding back in uncompliance from what the Gospel requires. Salvation, and the way of salvation, would be a Divinely simple thing. In that simple word, "Arise, and be baptised," you would have learnt your *freedom* for blessing. In that cleansing flood you would "wash away your sins, calling on the Name of the LORD." In glad acquiescence, your doubts would end. Your position as "hearers only," would be changed for that of glad receivers of the grace of GOD, and "doers of the word." You would be "brethren" in common, rejoicing together, in honour preferring one another. Our present *deadlock* would thus have ended. The strange spectacle—the shameful spectacle of two classes in the congregation, one received as members, the other viewed and so regarding themselves as non-members—what never was found in the Apostolic Churches—would no

longer be seen among us; it would have passed as a bad dream. "Ye are *all one* in CHRIST JESUS," would be the Apostle's acknowledgment of us, carrying our equally glad assent. "Ye are *all the children of GOD* by faith in CHRIST JESUS; for as many of you as were baptised into CHRIST did put on CHRIST": this would be the Apostle's assurance to us of present Grace and Standing, sustaining our own mindful endeavour to make it good.

If not at the time, yet at least when S. Paul on his visitation of the Churches came round again, he would bring to us "some (further) spiritual *gift*"[1]: being baptised, he would lay hands on us, calling upon GOD. In the Laying-on-of-hands, in Confirmation, we should receive the HOLY GHOST. None would doubt; none would hold himself back; none would question and say, 'What is the good?' All, every one, would press forward: not all equally prepared of heart, not all of equal understanding; but all to receive *the Gift*, for blessing thenceforth, and for fruit yet to appear. Not, that we might speak all with new tongues, not that we might prophesy, not that we might have gifts of healing; no, not that at all. It never was that: "Are all workers of miracles? have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with new tongues? do all interpret?" No, not *that*:

[1] Rom. i. 11.

but "to the end that we might be established"—that we might be strengthened with might in the inner man, and that all might be built up a Holy Temple in the LORD. The HOLY GHOST is the Gift given in the Laying-on-of-hands, then or now; the HOLY GHOST is the Gift received, then or now, for our sanctification: to the end that He, the Holy One, may make us holy—striving with each one, moving each one, inciting each one, towards all things that are good, from all things that are evil; stirring us up to conquer our faults, to acquire every grace of heart; and working in us, if so be we quench Him not, till He has done in us His perfect work and made us a People prepared for the LORD.

And, as often as "the disciples came together," namely, "on the first day of the week," "to Break the Bread," with the priest or presbyter the Apostle had set over the Church—with commandment to the people that they should receive him, and hold him very highly in love for his work's sake; with commandment also to him that he should take the oversight of them as GOD'S heritage, and be an example to the flock—there should we be. There should we *all* be: not one wanting, save through sickness—and then remembered; not one withdrawing himself from the Holy Communion, as holding himself unworthy to receive. Unworthy he must be, unworthy are the best. Yet may we,

though least in the Kingdom of Heaven, receive worthily—and not in a manner "unworthily." There would not be a scorner; there would not be a disputer. Dispute had no place in that day. The Apostle's word held all in faith: "The Cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the Blood of CHRIST? the Bread which we break, is it not the communion of the Body of CHRIST? For we being many are one Bread and one Body, for we are all partakers of that one Bread." What a blessed faith held all in obedience! and what a blessed realization!—"all partakers," all partakers of that one Bread; and so, all partakers of CHRIST, and so, all one Body of CHRIST.

Our Salvation would not then be complete, any more than it is now: but all would be *partakers;* all would be of the number, and know themselves to be of the number, of "those that were being saved"—and so held: all standing in faith, and all to add to their faith every virtue and every grace that is named—to faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly-kindness, charity—to *add* these, and not to think that they had already attained; to receive the word, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," and not to think that in the moment of their believing when they first heard the word, they entered into every blessing, and have need of nothing more than to hold fast this the

beginning of their confidence. Nor any, on the strength of their 'conversion' to think scorn of the Laying-on-of-hands, as though needing it not; and little even of their Baptism, disparaging it; and little of the Communion of the Body and Blood of CHRIST, disparaging it—and disparaging their brethren also, because they *do* receive all in faith and love, and hold all at a high price. Not in a false charity giving up what the Church has more than others for the enriching of men (Be charitable with your own, not with the things of CHRIST! in the things of CHRIST be faithful stewards). All receiving, by Divine gift and ordination, the Deacons, as the servants of the Churches, the Presbyters as the ministers of CHRIST and the stewards of His Mysteries, your Bishop as "the Angel" of GOD—to all giving honour and obedience. So would the word of one—himself taught by the Apostles, a disciple of S. John—the blessed Ignatius, who gave his body to be ground by the teeth of the wild beasts in testimony to the truth, be the record of your glad faith and love. "No *divisions*," but nipt in the bud by Apostolic authority; no schism or separation, but the same accounted "sensual," "carnal"; no "emulations," "envying and strife," but the same set down as "works of the flesh," avoided by all the faithful—these and the doers of them, and those that have pleasure in them, according

to the sure word, "Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them." "And, if any man teach otherwise," "note that man and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as *a brother*." All, thus, of one heart and of one soul, "continuing stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine": and thus, your faith and love coming abroad unto all men; and ye yourselves being GOD'S witness in the earth, of the FATHER and of the SON, fulfilling His Divine prayer, "that they all may be one, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

Were it not better for you? were it not better for the truth? were it not better for the Church of GOD?

I could wish it. Yes, I could wish that a thousand years were as one day! that the years that have passed between us and the Great Apostle were as one day! that *once again* your faith might be made straight, and your love increased and confirmed; that our separated brethren also, might return unto the Unity of the Faith, and that in "one Body" we might worship together in "one SPIRIT."

But so, GOD'S purpose would not be fulfilled: He has *trusted* us: He has committed to our keep-

ing things so precious as the Faith is, as those are which are called the "Mysteries of GOD." He has made us His *stewards*, everyone in his degree. He is trying us: this which we find, in these days of gainsaying and distrust, is for our probation, needful for it. Let it then be our prayer and endeavour (and none the less because the interval is long—one of well-nigh two thousand years—and the faithful hand is still, and the voice which once thrilled the hearts of the disciples is silent, and heard on earth no more) that we answer to his yet living words, "Be ye followers of me, even as also I am of CHRIST."

## III.

# S. Paul in the Congregation.

"I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."—Acts xx. 27.

THIS gives an aspect of completeness to S. Paul's teaching, such as certainly belongs to it; and as certainly belongs not to the teaching of any other. Among the Apostles and Ministers of the Word, none other could say it and have witness to show. There are many contributory reasons. Of the Apostles, S. Paul was probably the only one who was a man of letters and of trained and cultured mind. He was eminently the *Theologian* of the Church, its first and greatest teacher. Of the New Testament one half, and that the larger half, is due to him, directly or indirectly; of the *Ecclesiastical* portion, or that dealing with the Churches, nearly the whole. S. Paul claimed to have original and independent sources upon which to draw. Led for three years into the wilderness, and there rapt into the third heaven, he received the truth neither of man nor

by man; and when he came down, as from the Mount, he had a sure word, "I have received of the LORD that which also I have delivered unto you." Quite in keeping with this is his word of assumptive right, peculiar to S. Paul, "According to my Gospel"; and his claim made, and by him *upheld*, that the measure of all teachers to follow shall be taken and have their doctrine judged by his doctrine. Even where other Apostles have seemed in their teaching to be more excellent, as S. John of *love* and S. James of *works*, the exception does not hold. We cannot forget that the thirteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians is S. Paul's, and neither in S. John nor anywhere else in the world is there such a eulogy of love. Nor can we forget that it is S. Paul, and not S. James, who sums up in a sentence what the other expands into a discourse of five chapters, the supremacy of Christian obedience—"Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of GOD."

We do not need then, we who are teachers, to vary from his doctrine to be "faithful ministers" of CHRIST; nor need we go beyond him in any matter to make us sure that our preaching is that of "the whole counsel of GOD."

But there is more. Other teachers may have written discursive letters, or letters illustrative of

Christian graces, but S. Paul is the only one who shows us the actual *Congregation*, himself in the midst, sustaining this one, correcting that one, exhorting, instructing all; "rightly dividing the word of truth," and giving to each his portion in due season. From him, and not from any other, the Christian Minister has learnt all he knows respecting the application of truth to the individual members of the congregation. He only has written *Pastoral Epistles*. And thus again, in following him who had "the care of all the churches," these of every type, and in the members showing every variety and every degree of spiritual attainment; if, preaching to such we preach as he preached, and if, dealing with such we follow his methods, we may be quite sure—and need crave no higher assurance—that we are right and not wrong. We may be quite satisfied to be on the lines of S. Paul.

I find, then, this: that S. Paul addressing himself to the congregations, and dealing with sinners in the congregations, never preaches to them the doctrine of *Conversion* as it is now preached. He deals with the "carnal" and with the disorderly among them, with offenders of all kinds, both against the Law of the Christian life and against the Faith of CHRIST; sinners and offenders of every type and class he deals with, and he never says of them or to them that they

have need yet to be converted. He never says of such as have been baptised that they must be converted, or that they must be born again, or that they have yet to be made children of GOD. He never says it of them or of their children (Neither does the Church at this day). He says that they are "*in CHRIST*" that, being baptised, they "*did put on CHRIST.*" He says this of the carnal among the Corinthians, who "walked as men," though it is as "babes in CHRIST" he beholds them: "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in CHRIST"; "for ye are yet carnal." He says this of the Galatians, imperfect as their faith was, sinners against the Faith of CHRIST as they were: "Ye are all the children of GOD by faith in CHRIST JESUS, for as many of you as were baptised into CHRIST did put on CHRIST." And, Conversion he never mentions, whether to the one or to the other—never tells them that they must yet be converted; never bids them look for conversion as a grace to be brought to them, however sinning, however erring they be.

It is a capital matter. When this is realised and accepted—as it will have to be—the oppositions against the Church, those which now seem to have most potency, will fall as towers that have no foundations. It will be seen in that day that the Church was right after all in her Prayer Book

teaching, relative to the whole body of the baptised. From end to end she never tells them, or any of them, that they have need yet to be converted; neither does S. Paul. From the font to the sickness which is unto death she urges them to give heed to the things they *have received*—so to make their calling and election sure; just so does S. Paul.

The more this is thought out, with repeated readings of the Epistles, the stronger does the evidence become, until it is irresistible—evidence of every kind, all coming to one end, and there culminating: that the teaching of S. Paul—and after him the teaching of this day, *wherever it is true*—is that the baptised are "in CHRIST," and have their salvation to "work out"; and on this double footing all have standing, and are called, not without good assurance nor without fear and trembling—and then only *may* be called—to give diligence, all diligence, to make their calling and election sure.

Let another approach be made to this matter: A man gives diligence, and thus he grows in grace; he adds to his faith what S. Peter commands him to add—virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly-kindness, charity, and thus he puts on the new man; he fulfils S. Paul's command to walk "not after the flesh but after the SPIRIT," and thus the fruits of the

SPIRIT are found in him—"love, joy, peace." Will you tell such a man that he has need yet to be converted? will you bid him back from his walking after CHRIST to seek the gate of entrance? For conversion and the necessity of conversion is absolute—in the mouth of CHRIST it is: "Except ye be converted." Yet is CHRIST'S word, "Except ye *turn*": this, as given in the Revised Version, covers the whole of what is in the word as CHRIST spake it. It was preached by the Apostles to both Jews and Gentiles. But once having turned from their idols, once having received the witness of CHRIST the Apostles gave, having found the gate of entrance and entered in thereat—as by Baptism they did, and "straightway"—it was preached to them no more. Other things were preached to them, and never this, things which pertained to "the way"; with ceaseless exhortations, spurrings, corrections, and rebukes as needed. The baptised man who will follow *these*, the Apostles' words addressed to such, has need of nothing more to gain the goal and the quiet haven of rest when his course is run. Diligence is what now is needed: let diligence be given, let patience have her perfect work, and all is assured.

Conversion, as commonly preached and understood, is something quite different from this giving of diligence: it is so properly. Conversion, as preached, is a grace to be given, a grace from

above; a grace to be prayed for and to be looked for from GOD; the HOLY SPIRIT must work it: and till it is so wrought and so given, man can do nothing of himself; all he can do is to pray and to put himself in the way of grace—to pray and wait.

The Apostles never preached this in the Churches. (In this sense, the word 'conversion' is never once used by the Apostles nor by any New Testament writer.) They preached the very contrary: all the congregation had passed the gate of entrance; by Baptism they had entered in; they had put on CHRIST "as many as were baptised," and were now "in CHRIST"; and were addressed as such, and if found sinners and "yet carnal" were rebuked as such, and warned as such, always.

The other teaching received—that which writes 'conversion' in capital letters—has filled the Church with '*Anxious Inquirers*,' waiters for the Kingdom of Heaven, waiters for grace; a class not one example of which is found in the Apostolic Churches. And, till the Lord has mercy on them, they lie as the impotent man lay by the Pool of Bethesda, waiting for the moving of the waters; as impotent, as helpless as he, and well-nigh as hopeless as he, from hope long deferred, which truly maketh the heart sick. And thus they lay all the burden of their sinful condition on GOD:

"The wind bloweth where it listeth," is a word much on their lips; "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of GOD that showeth mercy."

Sinners and careless ones there were indeed in all the Churches to which S. Paul wrote Letters, but there were none such as these. They knew, in truth they knew, and were held in remembrance by the Apostle, what GOD had done for them and what *they* had to do, or else be destroyed like them who were their "ensamples" in the wilderness. But the teaching, to whomsoever addressed, was always stimulating, helpful, and—where there was a mind to follow it—comforting, in the highest and truest sense. The Apostles laid the burden upon *them*, and it is on them in our sight: they are required, every one of them, to work out their own salvation, and to give diligence, all diligence, to make their calling and election sure.

IV.

# Of the Two Ways: one S. Paul's.

"My Ways which be in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every Church."—1 Cor. iv. 17.

THE security for right direction is good and ample, I submit, if we follow S. Paul in *his ways;* and teach in the Congregation now as S. Paul taught in the Church at Corinth—saying the same things, the essential conditions being the same. And well we may do this: Not only is there a unity in truth, fitting it to all times; there is a unity likewise in human nature, and in some of its deepest aspects it is invariable. What is language more definitely to our present purpose, and will serve to bring an important matter at once into hand, is this: There were *sinners* in the Church of Corinth as there are sinners in any local Church now, and from S. Paul's treatment of them we may learn—and learn surely—what ought to be our treatment of the like now, find them where we may.

There are two ways of treating such: not only two in number, but two which are diverse—indeed, diametrically opposite; if the one is right, the other is wrong. That is to say, there are two ways of bringing the word to bear upon those in the congregation, who having received the faith of CHRIST and having been baptised are found—at any given time—living not conformably to their high calling; being carnally-minded, overtaken by sin, settled or settling-down into a state which is a state of condemnation.

(1) One is to account such, and to say of such, that they are not Christians at all: members of the visible Church—'*nominal* members'—they are not members of CHRIST; they are not "in CHRIST," they are "without"; they are "strangers and aliens." Their baptism is naught. To tell such that they must "walk after CHRIST," and must "add to their faith," is fatally to mislead them, as also it is to mock them, for that they cannot walk after CHRIST, having at present no power; and as for adding to their faith, they have no faith. "Strangers and aliens," they must be 'brought in,' they must be converted; they must be made CHRIST'S; they must be made children of GOD: and until they have got converted, for them to try and endeavour to walk after the SPIRIT and to do that which is good, is to seek salvation by their own works.

This is *one* of the two ways. It is a well-known one, having many that preach it every 'Sabbath-day.' It came in with the Reformation, in the Lutheran and Calvinian forms. I do not find that it was ever known before. It entered at once into all Puritan systems of doctrine; but never into the teaching of the Church. It became finally the most prominent doctrine in *Methodism;* and at this day it continues to hold a chief place in all preaching and teaching—reputedly '*Evangelical*'—in this our own and other lands. This is one way.

Is it S. Paul's way? Let us see what S. Paul's way was.

(2) The words of my text were addressed to the Church of Corinth. In the Church of Corinth were many sinners, sinners of every type; some, sinners exceedingly. That such was the case was a thing not hidden from the Apostle. Great was his distress thereat. "I hear it," "it hath been declared to me of you," he says; "it is commonly reported." This his First Epistle was written in correction of them: a Second followed, and on the same lines. What does he say? He says at once, "Are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" He says it roundly, "Ye are yet carnal." "Envying, and strife, and divisions" were rife among them, and with these "every evil work." He says, "there is utterly a fault among you; ye

do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren." He charges them, and rightly charges them, with profanity, and with gross disorderliness, and that even in the LORD'S Supper—"one is hungry and another is drunken." He convicts them of offences, of one offence in particular, which he tells them is "not so much as named among the heathen"—incest, and abominable foulness! Nay, worse in a way even than that—they were "*puffed up*, and had not mourned," that so it should be found: that foolish temper and frame of mind, it seems, was at large among them which is so peculiarly graceless, so peculiarly unlovely—swelling at pruriency, and as it were bursting to give it vent, to talk about it as only sinners know how.

Yet, writing to them in two Letters, What does he say of them? (It is a capital case for comparison, because it exceeds all that for comparison can ever be required.) What does he say? Does he say that they are "strangers and aliens"? that these obliquities prove it, and prove it conclusively? Does he say that they are not in CHRIST, and at present have nothing to do with CHRIST, nor CHRIST with them? Does he say that they have not the SPIRIT, that the SPIRIT cannot dwell in them—*cannot* be where there is sin? Does he say that first of all they must get converted, and be made GOD'S children, and that then and not before

will they have part and lot with the People of the LORD?

He says none of these things; he says the very contrary of these things: He says that they are "CHRIST'S," and "in CHRIST." He says that they have the SPIRIT, and that their bodies are Temples of the HOLY GHOST—pollute them how they may. He says that they are GOD'S, bought with a price, and sealed to Him. Why, it is their very sin—their awful sin! If their members were *not* the members of CHRIST their sin would be less—polluting themselves, they pollute *Him* in His Members; if they were not the temples of the HOLY GHOST their sin would be less, immeasurably less—defiling their own bodies, they defile what is GOD'S Temple, the Temple of the HOLY GHOST: therefore their sin is very great, unspeakably great, great beyond measure.

This is the *Apostle's* teaching: there cannot be the least doubt about it. I believe it to be the truer teaching: nay, I believe it is the only true teaching. I must believe so. These Epistles are open to you—open to you as well as to me. You may shut your eyes hard, and say what you are told to say, but you cannot—simply *cannot*—read these Epistles of S. Paul and make out therefrom another teaching. To bring the truth to bear upon them as "Members of CHRIST," "Temples of the HOLY GHOST"—not denying it in any wise,

but affirming it—that was S. Paul's method. It is the *other* of the two ways.

Conversion had been preached to them in their heathen state, as to the Jews it had in their unbelieving state. When they of either part, heard the word and received it—*that* was their Conversion.[1] When, having believed the word spoken, they said, "Men, brethren, What shall we do?" they were told to "repent and be baptised"—*that* was the Washing away of their sins, their New Birth, their being "born again" "of water and the SPIRIT." "Repent and be baptised every one of you for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the HOLY GHOST": it was CHRIST's word—received from Him, and it was the Apostle's word, giving witness to Him—"According to His mercy He saved us, by the Washing of Regeneration and renewing of the HOLY GHOST." It was true for them, and it was true for their children—"for the promise is unto you and to your children." Accordingly, their children were baptised with them and received into the Church, which was into CHRIST—"they and all theirs," "they and their households," "straightway." Thenceforth they had a standing, a Christian Standing, a standing and a Calling—parents and children; and came under Christian

[1] Used of them thus in Acts xv. 3: the only place in the Bible where the word 'conversion' is found.

Obligations—parents and children. Nor these only. In like manner must others, even all yet to follow, be added unto them—"for the promise is . . . to all them that are afar off, even as many as the LORD our GOD shall call." Of these again, "Except ye be converted"—"Except ye turn, and become as little children ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." Little children,[1] or "as little children"—one or other they must be, and as such be baptised. So was the number of them that believe increased, so did the flock grow.

Thenceforth (whatever the level of life) they were under the Law of Grace; they had entered in; they were not "without," they were "within": thenceforth, they were to be judged not as men in the flesh, but as men in the SPIRIT; not as without CHRIST, but as "in CHRIST." So did the word run; so did admonition, rebukes, judgment, go forth from the Apostolic "Thrones," reaching those that sinned. They were never told that they had yet to be converted—Never once. They were never told that they had yet to be born again—Never once. They were never told that they had yet to be made members of CHRIST—Certainly, never once. How the Apostles

[1] Little children who—being so "trained"—are found "in the way they should go," need no "turning": that would be their turning out of the way!

addressed them, you may know: the Epistles are open; I can read them, so can you. Never are they addressed on this wise.

They to whom the word came, are made *responsible* for grace given and received—that grace is declared; they were told that they "were baptised into CHRIST"; that so they "did put on CHRIST"; that their members are "the members of CHRIST," their bodies "temples of the HOLY GHOST." They are *held to* this standing, and *dealt with* as such—are admonished, entreated, warned; if need be, put to penance. They are bidden to "walk worthy" of their high calling in CHRIST; to "walk in newness of life," not after the flesh, but after the spirit; to "put off the old man with his deeds"; to reckon themselves as being "dead indeed unto sin"—"dead," "buried with CHRIST," and "risen with Him"—that thenceforth they should not serve sin, but should walk in newness of life. They were bidden to add to their faith every grace that is named, and thus to make their calling and election sure; to follow after holiness, to perfect holiness in the fear of GOD, and thus to work out their salvation with fear and trembling, because it is GOD that worketh in us both to will and to do. This was their duty, their bounden duty and calling; to all which they stand *pledged*, and must remain pledged evermore. They were told the certain

consequences of their neglect—shame and reproach, now and henceforth; in the end a certain and fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation. There is no escape back — none; and no escape forward, save in giving diligence and so fulfilling their course. And they *knew* it—"Do ye not know?"—and in their knowing it their safety lay: "Wherefore I will not be negligent," says one Apostle, "to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them"; and, says another Apostle, "I will therefore put you in remembrance, though once ye knew this, how that the LORD having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterwards destroyed them that believed not." They fell in the wilderness: all baptised, all eating the same spiritual food, they fell; being disobedient, they perished; lusting after evil things, they came not unto that good land. "They are our ensamples," cries S. Paul; "and these things," he says, "are written for our admonition, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted."

I look into the Congregation—What do I find? Three out of every four who are standing still! Have they any *Standing?* They do not know. Are they *CHRIST'S*, are they *members* of CHRIST? They do not know—rather, they fear not. Have they the SPIRIT given them, are their bodies *His*

*temples?* They do not know—rather, they think not. Have they a clear calling to go on from any beginning? They do not know, they stand in indecision. It is the paralysis of the congregation! It is miserable and confounding! It is not I that speak: it is *S. Peter and S. Paul*, "Exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of GOD wherein ye stand"—by you to be made good. It is not I that speak: it is *GOD* and His *Word*, telling you that you are CHRIST'S and His members; that you have the SPIRIT given you—in you—in your bodies as His temples. You have standing and calling, or no man has. If your *will* is to serve GOD and to be found in Him, all now that you have to do is to go right on; repenting of your sins, to go straight forward: the which, if you do, May my soul perish if you are not saved in the Day of the LORD!

V.

# Of Conversion, according to S. Paul.

"Remember that aforetime ye, the Gentiles in the flesh, were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the Commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh."—Eph. ii. 11-13.

AMONGST the many lessons we have need to learn from S. Paul are some of importance so great that the claim, to have a whole place to themselves and to be set in a vivid light, cannot be disallowed.

This is one of them: *Except to Jews or Heathens S. Paul never preached Conversion.* It is a very significant fact. Would that it had been noted: there had then been many a heart-ache the less; and many a course the more finished in joy through the giving of diligence—a course, alas, broken *here*, striking on this stone of stumbling.

It is time we minded our lessons, those given us

by S. Paul. To the unbelieving Jews or heathen Gentiles only, did the Apostle preach Conversion; and to them only in the sense which is to be looked for in *Missionary Reports*—not in that sense which now is current and is alone cared for. He never preaches Conversion when addressing those who were called Christians; he never preaches Conversion when addressing those whose custom it was to meet together for worship on the Sunday. I should be quite following the example of S. Paul, if I never at any time told you that you must be converted; I should not be following the example of S. Paul, if I told you that you must be converted: S. Paul never told baptised people that they must be converted. It is, indeed, a significant fact. I suppose S. Paul was right: but if he was right, then certainly many preachers and teachers are wrong. These preachers and teachers take much credit to themselves because they proclaim constantly, as from the house-top, the indispensable necessity of conversion for *all*—men, women, and children, baptised or unbaptised; and they have many hard words to say against the Church, because, as they reckon, this doctrine of Conversion is not preached therein, or not preached as it should be: and yet, S. Paul never preached it at all. Now, conversely; if these preachers and teachers are right, then S. Paul was wrong. S. Paul has left us nine Epistles full of earnest

preachings, and therein he never once mentions Conversion, name or thing.

The fact is still more striking when we consider what these Romans and Corinthians and Galatians and others were to whom S. Paul wrote. They were not all what they should be—not at all. They were all baptised; they all came together on the Sunday; they all made a point of hearing S. Paul preach when he went their way; they all heard his Letter read when he sent them one: so far they were all alike; but as for anything more, they differed one from another just as those who customarily attend our church-services differ now. Some were striving and some were careless; some were growing in grace and some were falling into sin—yea, living in sin; some were increasing in the knowledge and the love of GOD, and some were turning away and were "being removed unto another gospel, which was not another." I suppose, indeed, that there is not now to be found a more 'mixed' congregation (to use the approved word) than was that of Corinth, to which S. Paul addressed two of his Letters: one had taken to himself his father's wife and was living in incest; others, instead of "mourning" for this, were, as the Apostle says, "puffed up"—evidently, the meaning is that they made ill jokes about it, and talked and smiled as only men carnally-minded know

how; some did wrong one to another, and defrauded one another; some carried their profanity even into the house of GOD—the LORD'S Supper was profaned by them, they ate and drank to their own condemnation, "one was hungry another was drunken"; contentions were rife among them. S. Paul in writing to them, says, "I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in CHRIST; for whereas there is among you envyings, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?"

Yet, writing even to *these*, and the like of these, S. Paul never says, Ye must be converted—he never preaches Conversion to them—neither he, nor any other of the Apostles. The Apostles were all of one mind, and did all teach the same thing, but never this.

Then what does S. Paul preach to such? Repentance and forsaking. Yes, indeed; yet scarcely this first: what he preaches is, *Christian living*, walking in newness of life, walking according to our high calling in CHRIST JESUS our LORD. "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of GOD." "Put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy conversation out of your mouth: and lie not one to another, seeing that ye have

put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man." He does not deny their Christian Standing; he affirms it, yea in every way he establishes it, for the use he has of it; he does not deny their being the Children of GOD in CHRIST JESUS, he says that they are; he does not deny their being Regenerate, he says that they are: "Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the Name of the LORD JESUS"—to these same Corinthians it is that he says it. "Ye are all sons of GOD, through faith, in CHRIST JESUS: for as many of you as were baptised into CHRIST, did put on CHRIST." This is what the Apostle says to these sinners. This is his foundation whereon he builds all his peremptory expostulations: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into CHRIST were baptised into His death?" "Know ye not that ye are the temple of GOD?" "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of CHRIST?" Wherefore, "As ye have received CHRIST JESUS the LORD, so walk ye in Him." I do not need to add of S. Paul's teaching the requirement of "sorrow," even "godly sorrow," which "worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of," in all who sin, and the putting away of that which is sin —without which grace is suspended, and its channels choked; that without repentance, forgiveness there neither is nor can be, and

that "without holiness no man shall see the LORD." That goes without saying in a Christian congregation. But I do want you to mark this, namely, that *Conversion*, in its modern acceptation, as something more than repentance—over and above—has no place in the teaching of S. Paul. Many of our time (as all men know) preach its necessity for all the baptised—men, women, and children[1]; S. Paul never did so: even when he preached to the sinners of them he never uses the word, he avoids it altogether.

Often, in ways secret and unknown, GOD calls the spirit of man to Himself: but this He gave not unto men to do, nor to meddle with. GOD'S inward call gives witness to itself, and needs not that any man should bear witness to it. It is without time-limit or limitation of whatsoever kind: before CHRIST, in CHRIST, and out of CHRIST; though subject to CHRIST—as required to be for enrichment in Him, wherever CHRIST reigns and is made known—as all things are. Yet this, the Apostles never call Conversion. It is the surrender of man to GOD, in Him believing —what has been required of man from the beginning. It is, for Christians, a whole trust in CHRIST for salvation. It is thus, in this latter

[1] On this rack the saintly Mother of the Wesleys was tortured at the age of 70! The preachers had found out that she had not been '*converted*'!

case, what S. Paul means when he preaches Justification by Faith.

And now to this matter must be brought some further enlightenment, and great enlightenment there is, for all who will receive it.

The word "Conversion" the Apostles did not find in the Bible: *they* used it for the first time of using, in declaring how the Gentiles by their ministry had become converts to the faith of CHRIST, in turning from their idols to serve the Living GOD (Acts xv. 3). This still remains the only place in the Bible where the word "*conversion*" is found. Its derivative forms "convert," "converting," "converted," and the like, are found in Old and New Testaments together some fourteen times, and oftener, counting the words which equally connote it, "turn," "turning," "turned," and the like; but all are used in this latter sense only—*that* in which the Apostles themselves used them, and never once in the sense in which the word "conversion" is so much in use now—that as preached to baptised people: a conversion to be looked for, prayed for, and waited for, till it shall please GOD by His Holy SPIRIT to work it in them. In this sense of the word it is no where to be found in the Bible, whether in Old Testament or in New. That word of the LORD JESUS—which has been so largely put to an evil use, in making sad the hearts which GOD

hath not made sad—is no exception: "Except ye be converted," is "Except ye *turn*"—neither more nor less—the word "turn" (which takes its place in the Revised Version) covers the whole meaning of the word as CHRIST spake it.

In an underlying sense, these words of CHRIST stand in a harmony, which is unbroken, with all the words of the Prophets whatsoever they be (yet fuller than they), and with all the words of the Apostles after Pentecost (then fullest of all); they stand in majesty and truth relative to *Himself* and that which is given in Him: "Except ye turn (from your own ways—to GOD not pleasing) and become as little children (docile, teachable, ready to receive the things of CHRIST and 'the Gift of GOD' which is by Him), ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven," nor into its mysteries. And thus the words are heard again: "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins."

This is conclusive of the whole matter: the Apostles were right in confining the use of this word "conversion" within such a limit; the preachers of another doctrine are wrong in extending its meaning to what is quite another thing, a thing which Holy Scripture no where bids men look for.

But much more there is to follow—which indeed of necessity follows—and much more to

mark; or we lose some greatly needed lessons.

And this first: S. Paul knew nothing of that which in some quarters finds so great favour, and is insisted upon with so much insistence; namely, the division—sharp drawn—of each congregation into two distinct classes, labelled respectively, '*the Converted*' and '*the Unconverted*.' The Pharisees appear to have known something of it, "Stand by thyself, I am holier than thou": and S. Paul had been a Pharisee; but when he became a Christian and an Apostle, he left all that behind him. He counts all as brethren, brethren equally in CHRIST. He addresses them in common, and recognises them as "saints." Admonishing one, entreating another, he says, "As my beloved sons, I warn you." And he charges others that be spiritual, that *they* do in like manner: "Warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men"; "and if any man obey not our word, note that man; yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him *as a brother*." It is thus this "father" in CHRIST walks among his children, and gives to each his portion. And, one and all, he beseeches them—"by the tender mercies of GOD," "by the meekness and gentleness of CHRIST," "by the holy Name whereby they were called"—"as ye have received CHRIST JESUS the LORD, so walk ye in Him." "Ye are witnesses," he says, "and GOD

also," "as ye know how we dealt with each one of you as a father with his own children, exhorting you, and encouraging you, and testifying, to the end that ye should walk worthily of GOD Who called you into His own Kingdom and glory."

We have lost S. Paul's *touch* of the many in our congregations "whose conversation" is not such "as becometh saints," because the holy bond of brotherhood is for them denied, or is but dimly discerned. He knew that some were "carnal," and some were flagrant offenders, and some were not obedient to the truth; yet he says of them—herein counting them one with himself—"We, being many, are one Body in CHRIST, and every one members one of another"; "for by one SPIRIT were we all baptised into one Body": he says, "Ye are all sons of GOD, through faith, in CHRIST JESUS; for as many of you as were baptised into CHRIST did put on CHRIST." Absolutely nothing did this Apostle of the LORD know of that which would forestall Him Who shall come to be our Judge, and by a dividing line, carried right through every congregation— according as each one is labelled '*converted*' or '*unconverted*'—place those on the right hand, these on the left!

And this mark likewise—to some it may seem no great matter, yet its practical and theological

importance is unspeakably great: S. Paul never approaches baptised sinners as *aliens*, as strangers or outcasts, in the manner that is so common now. He does not say of any such, 'Ye are without CHRIST, "aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without GOD in the world."' He never says that of the baptised. Also, he never calls them '*poor sinners*,' or in any wise addresses them in terms of commiseration. One truth he holds fast, and one thought upholds him—their sin is against CHRIST! In Him they are; verily they are His members, His sheep—though erring and straying; and His mark is upon them, and Him they do dishonour! "What!" "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of CHRIST!" "Know ye not that ye are the Temple of GOD!" "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into CHRIST, were baptised into His death?" and "How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" Their sin is against grace, against love, and against Him Who hath called them unto this grace. S. Paul never allows such to think they are not CHRIST'S: he rules out the thought and tells them roundly that they are. "Ye are CHRIST'S," he says of all to whom he writes, whether they be "spiritual" or "yet carnal." Their 'new name' is a token of it; and 'Christening'—the very word—is its enduring witness.

So wide a departure from Apostolic teaching and method, must carry results different from, and equally wide of, those which S. Paul laboured for. Inevitably it must: and the results cannot but be of the most serious and practical kind. The Christian state, in having many grades and shades of character within it, is, with whatever aggravations, substantially the same now as it was in the days of S. Paul: but *then* it had a working Order, resting upon an acknowledged Unity: all were receivers of the same Sacraments, all lent their ears to the same word of exhortation, all were amenable to discipline. We have retained that sameness of a varied personal character (which indeed is inseparable from a state of imperfection), and have lost that oneness of operation which is indispensable to due progress. And this last we have done through our not giving heed to S. Paul.

Without S. Paul's *teaching*, convincingly brought home, the many in our congregations are personally untouched: the word set forth, couched in forms of exhortation, has no present application to them; nor can it have until they have become acknowledged recipients of grace. Where grace and calling do not exist, there the responsibility which inheres in each does not lie.

To the multitude *outside*, who sit at ease, or are found among the swine-troughs, serving themselves

and not the LORD JESUS CHRIST, we cannot, with a faith so clipt and shorn, bear the Apostle's word—we cannot bid them *home*, no, not on the instant—something called 'conversion' must first take place in them, for which they must wait, and pray, and hope.

Without the Apostle's *faith*, which in his mouth became motion, instant, urgent, we cannot say as he said to all baptised, "Ye are CHRIST'S," ye are in CHRIST, ye have put on CHRIST—"for as many of you as were baptised into CHRIST did put on CHRIST"; Wherefore, dearly beloved, "as ye have therefore received CHRIST JESUS the LORD, so walk ye in Him."

Without *S. Paul's teaching*, and it put from them, nay, vehemently spurned, our Separating brethren of the many bodies cannot return to us: the Church's Prayer-book retains it all, and teaches it to their offence every day, and her preachers too —though some falteringly. So long as that is so, other points of difference are small indeed—too small to be accounted of. They are the motes, but this is the beam: and while the offending witness is borne, and no return to it is made by them through S. Paul's Epistles, they *must* go their several ways and continue to bear theirs. This have we gained—or rather should I say, lost, by the failure of some to observe what it is that "our beloved brother Paul, according to the

wisdom given unto him, hath written unto us in all his Epistles."

That many-voiced complaint, as touching the Church of England, namely, that many of her ministers do not preach the necessity of Conversion as they should do, may be true or not true. When we turn to sure ground, that of all prescript forms of ministration (whether to be used in the church or out of the church), all doubt is at an end. It is evident to all men diligently reading the *Book of Common Prayer* that Conversion has no place therein, in the sense in which it is popularly preached; but only in the sense to which witness has been here borne. The Church uses it only in the sense in which S. Paul uses it. His own "wonderful conversion" is the subject of a yearly commemoration: but Paul was *Saul*, unwashed of his sins, and not yet received into CHRIST'S fold. And, in the Good Friday collect (that in which we make intercession for all men whom GOD has made), we take with us words, and say, "Thou Who wouldest not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live, have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels, and heretics . . . and so fetch them home, blessed LORD, to Thy flock, that they may be saved . . . and be made one flock, under one Shepherd." This is a like instance. And with these two instances of use, the witness of the Church to

the *requirement* of Conversion ends. And thus (whether for blame or praise)—in preaching to Jews, to heathen, and to all that "are without," "not of this flock," the necessity of Conversion; but to those that "are within," being baptised, repentance and amendment of life only—the Church stands in an agreement with S. Paul in all his Epistles which is as exact, as at present it is solitary and unique.

## VI.

# Of Standing, as given in Baptism, according to S. Paul.

"They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."—Gal. v. 24.

THESE words are startling ones. If they apply to *you*, the statement that you have crucified the flesh and its lusts is a startling statement. You would hesitate to say that of yourselves; and of those in the Congregation who are not spiritual, you would scarcely say that they are Christ's, still less would you say of them that they had crucified the flesh and its lusts. One way would be to say that they *ought* to crucify the flesh and its lusts: but that is not S. Paul's way, nor is that S. Paul's word. True as it is, it does not cover the whole matter: it is less than what the Apostle says.

S. Paul says, "they *have* crucified the flesh with its lusts." And it was not because they were spiritual. No; S. Paul himself it is who shows

the contrary. Addressing the Corinthians, he says, "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto *carnal*." Still he says of them, "Ye are CHRIST'S"; and here he says, "They that are CHRIST'S have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." It seems a contradiction; it does. But it is a contradiction only in our own minds: it is because we put another and a human meaning upon the words that they do not stand together; the thing spoken of is taken to be self-discipline. It is not self-discipline, it is crucifixion.

It points to a by-gone and Divine event. It is a Divine act: this constitutes its completeness. This makes it possible for it to be said without limitation or reserve. They that are CHRIST'S have surrendered themselves or been taken in surrender to be crucified with Him, dead and buried with Him, with Him to rise unto newness of life. This is the exact parallel of what is found in the Catechism, "A death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness," as spoken of Baptism. This is the exact meaning, the theological value, of S. Paul's statement, "Therefore we are buried with Him by Baptism into death; that like as CHRIST was raised up from the dead by the glory of the FATHER, even so we also should walk in newness of life." This is the truth S. Paul strikes home, "Know ye not that so many

of us as were baptised into JESUS CHRIST were baptised into His death?" "For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto GOD. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto GOD through JESUS CHRIST our LORD." For "our old man," he says, "is crucified with Him."

The Apostle says it of *all*, without exception—"so many of us as were baptised." It is done, completed, and is beyond change or recall. It is just because it *is* of this nature, and bears this one definite signification, that he *can* say it of all. This is why to loose inexact thinkers who follow a false theology there seems to be so many inconsistencies, and even contradictions, in S. Paul's writings. He says, for instance, "Ye are CHRIST'S," and yet he says of the *same* individuals, "Ye are yet carnal"; he says again, Ye "have put on CHRIST," and yet he *bids* them to "put off the old man which is corrupt," and "to put on the new man"; he says, "They that are CHRIST'S have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts," and yet he convicts those who he here says "are CHRIST'S" of *fleshly sins* into which they had fallen, and reproves them.

In the commonly received theology, that which vaunts itself against the older Church teaching of the Prayer Book, these are *manifest* contradictions,

impossible combinations of character — "Can a fountain send forth both bitter water and sweet?" But in S. Paul's mind there is no contradiction: He takes his theology from its source; he has his teaching direct from his LORD; he gives it out fresh from the spring, pure from the fountain; and therefore he gives it without respect of persons, or limitations of men. With him GOD'S gift of grace does not depend on subsequent character, nor on realised attainment, nor yet on present correspondence of life. "The gifts and calling of GOD are without repentance." It is true alike for the holy and for the unholy, the spiritual and the carnal. In S. Paul's theology there is no contradiction at all, but harmony which is perfect. Truth in all its parts—*whole*—is the truth: grace, also grace answering to grace; one by gift, the other by gain made day by day; he assures of the one, he requires the other. He does not account a present surrender, a sensible conversion, the beginning of spiritual life: he takes men out of themselves, and away from their present states of self-contemplation, back to the Rock whence they were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence they were digged. Their *natural* condition lasted unto that time — "Such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified." A "laver of Regeneration" was found for them and com-

manded. He tells them of it, assures them of it, and lays it down squarely as a great foundation truth, untouched by present sin, unmoved by human failure or default.

Having this done, he makes the same a mighty lever for their upraising. It becomes with him *the motive power* of all his fervent pleading, "How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptised into JESUS CHRIST were baptised into His death?" He does this to all alike, in all cases, to Romans, to Corinthians, to Galatians, and to all the rest—whoever had need—even to as many as were forgetting that they were "purged from their old sins," and were being "again entangled therein and overcome."

If you were to ask me, What is the great want for these times, I should say at once, *A Pauline Theology:* teaching nothing short of S. Paul's; expostulation based on dogmatic truth such as S. Paul's; calls to holiness of life like his—reasonable, strong, fervid, peremptory.

In the present-day Congregation (as in the Churches of that day) there is a manifest difference of character as respects *persons:* some are being turned to righteousness more and more, and some have need to be turned; in some sin rules, in some grace; some are fruitful hearers, and some are unfruitful. Preachers who have

adopted the modern theology, divide these as sheep and goats are divided: this may appear unto men a more excellent way, but it is not Scriptural; it is not in the Word as we receive it from S. Paul. Very different was his way.

In all the Churches of the Saints to whom he wrote, there was all the difference that is found now as between person and person: but he addresses all alike, in one category, as "Saints," "called to be saints," "all the children of GOD," "all one in CHRIST JESUS." This Apostle of CHRIST knew well what he was about. He did not cloak their sin. He did not cloak it in the incestuous Corinthian, nor in them that had pleasure therein. He did not cloak it in the Galatians. He tells them of their sins, one by one he tells them, and reproves them—sins of the flesh, sins in the life, sins against the faith, sins scarcely to be named but with averted face; and all against CHRIST. But he does not alter his language: no; his words stand, and are re-affirmed. To the Galatians, whose sins were mainly against the *faith*, he says, "Ye are all the children of GOD by faith in CHRIST JESUS; for as many of you as have been baptised into CHRIST have put on CHRIST." To the Corinthians, who were sinners after the *flesh*, he says, "Know ye not that your members are the members of CHRIST? shall I then take the members of CHRIST, and make them the members of an

harlot!" To the Romans, who raised the question, "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" he says, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into JESUS CHRIST were baptised into His death?" He warns them, and when he does, his warning is of the same piece and part of the same circle of truth, "I write not these things to shame you," he says, "but as *my beloved sons* I warn you." "These things," what things?—sins, which showed them to be "yet carnal"; yea, one, in which many were concerned, "not so much as named among the heathen," he says. And still, "my beloved sons"; yea, and more—still "in CHRIST," still "members of CHRIST," still "temples of the HOLY GHOST." Nay, just this it was which *made* the sins—which gave them *character*, and made them to be exceeding sinful. But the warning runs on, and still it is on the same line, "If any man defile the temple of GOD, him shall GOD destroy; for the temple of GOD is holy, which temple *ye* are." He warns, and he judges, and the judgment proceeding out of his mouth is still on the same line, and on *these*—these, he says "that are *within*"; "for what have I to do to judge them that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? (But them that are without GOD judgeth.) Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." "I tell you before, as I have also

told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of GOD"—no *after* part, neither lot nor inheritance, could they have. Such was S. Paul's teaching, as to these; such was his Master's: "The Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather *out of* His Kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity."

The Apostle was not hampered with any theory of 'Once in grace, always in grace.' He was not afraid of telling men that they were in CHRIST, nor afraid of rebuking any such. He knew no incompatibility between Baptismal Regeneration and Conversion: he knew it in himself, *of* himself, that his Conversion to CHRIST dated from His appearing to him in the way; he knew with equal certainty, that his sins were washed away—not then and there (as some say) but—in the Baptismal Washing, in "the laver of Regeneration": "And now, why tarriest thou? arise and wash away thy sins, calling on the Name of the LORD"; and the man who had been three days converted, obeyed and was clean. He who speaks of a new life in CHRIST, to be realised only in the obedience of faith, to be perfected only by diligence given whole and life-long, says—speaking of a by-gone event—"According to His mercy He saved us, by the Washing of Regeneration and renewing of the HOLY GHOST."

And in this way all was clear: there were no contradictions, and nothing was impossible. With S. Paul, it was just all one stream of grace and truth; flowing fresh from the Smitten Rock, filling all the channel bank to bank, fertilising wherever it flowed, constraining wherever it touched: to the Corinthians one whole stream, to the Galatians one whole stream, to the Ephesians one whole stream; to those who strove, and to those who were not striving; to those who were fighting the good fight of faith, and to those who in inglorious ease were allowing themselves to be overcome—to all alike one whole truth, having many sides and many applications: that they "are CHRIST'S," and that "they that are CHRIST'S have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."

## VII.

# Of 'Anxious Inquirers.'

"Exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand."—1 S. Peter v. 12.

TWO classes of men in the present-day Congregation there are who need "the word of exhortation"—the anxious and the careless. Both show wrong conditions: the anxious only less so than the careless. Neither anxious nor careless should be found in the Church. There is a difference between those and these. But the greatest point of difference is one which is not commonly apprehended.

The careless are a class of long standing in the Church. They were found in all the Apostolic Churches. The anxious are a new class altogether. They were not found in the Apostolic Church. They are found only in quite recent times, and are the fruit of a teaching which is not the teaching of the Apostles.

There were anxious inquirers in the days of the Apostles, unquestionably; but, not in the Church.

They were always without the Church. They were always of the number of those who had not been baptised, who had not been illuminated, who had not been taught in the Word. Nicodemus, who came to JESUS by night, was an anxious inquirer. The rich young Ruler, who came unto Jesus running, was an anxious inquirer. The three thousand on the day of Pentecost were anxious inquirers. Saul, who was converted in the way to Damascus, was an anxious inquirer. The Ethiopian Eunuch was an anxious inquirer. The Philippian jailor was an anxious inquirer. But all these were without the Church: all these were as yet unbaptised. So soon as they were baptised they ceased to be anxious inquirers.

We do not find an anxious inquirer within the Church. We do not find one putting anxious questions, such as, "What must I do to be saved?" We do not find the Apostles, in writing their Epistles, directing any portion of what they wrote to the case of anxious inquirers. There were, then, no anxious inquirers. Those who *had been* anxious inquirers ceased to be such as soon as they were brought into the Church by Baptism. Beginners they were, only beginners. They had much to learn, and much to add; but the stage of anxious inquiry they had passed, one and all. They had found the Messias, they had found the CHRIST, and being baptised they had

started rejoicing on their way. They were at first "babes in CHRIST," only babes; but they were *in* Him—that they knew. They had everything to add unto their faith, but the Day-star had risen in their hearts. They were no longer in darkness, they were light in the LORD. The class—now so common, that it has a special literature addressed all to itself—that of '*Anxious Inquirers*,' was not represented in the Church.

And why? For this very reason: because in the Apostolic Congregation nothing which was matter for anxious inquiry was found. In the Apostles' doctrine there was light for men, there was guidance. Doubt and uncertainty had passed. They were "in CHRIST": they were told by the Apostles that they were in CHRIST. They were addressed by them as "brethren," as brethren beloved; as "saints," and "called to be saints." Whatever was yet wanting, their way was plain as the day: they were to go on, right forward. They were told they were called to holiness: they were to fulfil their calling. They were told not to receive the grace of GOD in vain: they were to give heed, earnest heed, and not to let it slip. They were to beware lest any old root, any root of evil done in the evil days troubled them, whereby they should be defiled. They were to give diligence, all diligence, to make their calling and election sure. They were to add to their

faith virtue, and to virture knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, brotherly-kindness and charity. If they failed—they fell short of the grace that had been *given* them: if they turned back—it was "as a dog to his vomit, and as a sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire": if they forgot it—it was that they forgot that they were "purged from their old sins." But they need not fail: grace should be given them, the strength of CHRIST should be sure. They need not make shipwreck: He in Whom they stood was sufficient for them; only let them give diligence. It was blessed teaching, plain and straight: how they stood, they *knew;* not a question about it, not one could arise.

No; that state of mind which is now so common was not then found. Among the early Christians, among all those who were baptised, in all GOD'S host, there was not found or spoken of one like unto poor Cowper, who could torture his soul—and that month after month—after a fashion which multitudes have followed and have made a very rack:—

> "'Tis a thing I long to know,
> Oft it causes anxious thought:
> Do I love the LORD or no?
> Am I His, or am I not?"

and if any one such had risen up, he would

speedily have had returned to him a perfect answer, "This is the love of GOD that we keep His commandments."

It is a wrong condition, essentially a wrong condition. The man so found is self-poised. He is revolving upon his own centre. All his questions start from himself, and to himself return. It is all 'my soul' with him—'my salvation'—'am I accepted?'—'shall I be saved?' If it be anything more than a mere transitory state, it is a false condition altogether for a man to be in, and the sooner he is out of it the better. The natural man is not to be blamed for it: it *is* natural; it is instinctive. This is its truest character. Man shows it with the best of his species; and also in common with the whole animal creation. A dog thrown into a seething flood will strain every muscle to gain the bank: a man will do the same, undoubtedly he will; he will not perish if he can help it. But this is not Grace, it is Nature. And so all the anxious inquirers we read of were in a state of nature, and not yet in a state of grace. Having his eyes open, a sense of his danger is sufficient to put a man into this condition. But when deliverance is brought to him the condition ceases: something worthier succeeds—or should succeed—something worthy of the man.

It is just this to which men *need to be called*—

to a knowledge of their deliverance in CHRIST, and to what now is required of them. And here, doubt cannot be allowed: the Apostle's word is express, "Know ye not your own selves how that CHRIST is in you, except ye be reprobates?" And these men are *not* reprobates—reprobates no man counts them: they are in CHRIST, and CHRIST in them. But they ask for a sign, while CHRIST'S call is for service: they ask for the fruits of the SPIRIT to be found in them; the call CHRIST makes is that they should bring them forth. Let them do it, let them obey, and sign they will have.

Yes; self-concern is natural, and is not to be condemned: but when it continues after One has given deliverance it becomes positively sinful; it marks then a sinful condition.

A man who is filled with a great anxiety to get place or calling is concerned only for *self:* his strivings are for himself, his eyes are full of self, his thoughts are full of self. He is anxious, naturally he is. He is fretful perhaps, and his wife does not blame him. She knows better. She knows that his mind is strained and on the rack. But let him get the appointment, and the burden—the stress, rolls off in a trice. Now he can work, and work with a will. Now, anxiety—care for himself, ceases. How he may please his master; how he can show himself faithful; how well he may discharge his duties: this is all his

care. He is twice the man he was before, for he can give himself unremittingly and without distraction to the duties of his calling. His brow is smoothened out; he wears a smile on his face; he can please all round.

And so it is in the Kingdom of God. A man is worth nothing as an *anxious inquirer*. If he reads his Bible, it is to find something for himself: it is not to learn GOD'S will, that he may do it and be glad. If he goes to church, it is to 'get good' for himself: it is not to worship GOD and give Him thanks. If he calls on a spiritual friend, it is not to cheer his friend's countenance, his cravings are for himself. If a new preacher comes into town, his first thought is not of the *Master*—he does not ask 'What authority comes he with? what doctrine does he bring?' but, 'Will he do me good? I will go and hear him.' His thinkings are of himself. He is anxious and of doubtful mind; he devours tracts; he runs hither and thither, after this preacher and that, this word and that word—scattering much and gathering little, but dissipation only: and often, alas! too often (by an easy transition), coming at last to regard this very dissipation of his better self as that which is to fill and satisfy his craving.

Now a man who bears the name of CHRIST, wants all the energy he has, all the powers he has, to combat his faults; to grow in grace, and

of graces to make progress in each one; and otherwise to attend to the duties of his calling. He is not called to anxious inquiry, he is called to run the Christian race. Often, too often, anxious inquiry precludes the running altogether. 'How shall I save my soul?' is a cry of wailing, a cry of shameful weakness, a cry of faithless self-concernment. It is like a soldier, who grounds his arms and asks how he may save his skin. If he would save his skin, let him overcome, let him face the foe, let him go up to the battle: it is there only he can do a soldier's part, and please Him Who has chosen him to be a soldier.

To be 'an anxious inquirer' is taken often to be a matter of some praise; and to be called 'a seeker after truth' is reckoned by many to be rather a fine thing. It is, on the contrary, a shameful thing altogether in any one called a Christian. The noble old heathens, as Seneca and Marcus Aurelius, were anxious inquirers, and seekers after truth. In them it was noble, they were feelers after GOD; but in us it is shameful. This is to go back to the heathen position. GOD has called us to Himself in CHRIST; and in "the Faith delivered to the Saints" we have the faith "once for all." Let us give faithfulness, that and thanks. To abide as anxious inquirers is to set CHRIST at naught; to be yet seekers after truth is to affront the Faith. It is a sin against grace.

Let me plead with you, whoever of you are conscious of standing somewhere within the limits of this class. You are perplexed—discerning not the lines of your spiritual position; and your perplexity is a new fact in Christendom. It was *unknown* for fifteen hundred years. In the days of the Apostles there was not a trace of it. You may have your position cleared up, if only you will gather it anew from the guidance then given, and yet given, with sureness. Then, the light shone. Then, the trumpet gave no uncertain sound. In these days there are anxious inquirers, but there were not *then*. In these days anxious inquirers are to be counted by the score, aye by the hundred, abiding month after month, not infrequently year after year, as anxious inquirers: making no progress, nor apparently likely to make any. *Then*, there were none: none in the Church, and without the Church, none—abiding as such; no, not for a day, scarcely for an hour. The word of CHRIST'S Apostle delivered them, once and for all; and being called, being baptised, they went on their way with a good courage. They were as you—as *you?* nay, heathens, pagans many of them, down to the very hour of their Baptism! with everything to add—virtue, knowledge, temperance, godliness, and what not? and all depending on the diligence they should thenceforth give, and on GOD'S grace

assured to them in fullest measure. Doubt there was none: none in S. Paul's mind; none in their own. "My GOD shall supply all your needs out of the riches of His fulness"; "Being confident of this very thing that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the Day of JESUS CHRIST." They shared the confidence alway in proportion as they gave the heed.

They did not, it is true, account themselves as having *attained*, neither as being *already perfect*. They made no such mistake. How should they? They were "babes in CHRIST"; made such by CHRIST'S act, they knew, and not by their own. They had to grow in grace, and in the knowledge and the love of GOD. They were weak, and had to "go from strength to strength." The law for them and for all men was, "line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little." Add *this*, that they were "yet carnal"—in part they were, in some things manifestly carnal, and had need to be instructed, exhorted, entreated "that ye put off the old man with his deeds, which is corrupt; and that ye put on the new man, which after GOD is created in righteousness and true holiness." All this they had *yet to do*. But they had every encouragement given them—"This is the true grace of GOD wherein ye stand"—and they took the encouragement, and found it help and comfort both.

And see how the great Apostle condescended to them, and "to the weak became as weak." He charged them to fight the good fight and to go on unto perfection—"Not as though I had already attained," said he, "either were already perfect." "Affectionately desirous" he was of them. "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings," so did he. Now he soared aloft, and had great things to say; now he came down to them, stooping low, to detach them from that to which they still clave; using many an art, making many an endeavour, to set them fluttering off; taking them, bearing them on his wings. Round about them were the rude sticks they called their nest, and the taint and refuse of many a carnal feast; but before them the azure blue and the spreading heavens. He would have them *try* their wings; only thus could they learn to fly. Do it, and the strength would come: only thus *could* it come.

Brethren, it is so now. How I wish I could assure you of this! Then should your anxious inquiries cease; then should you be anxious inquirers no more. Some tell you that you are not in CHRIST; that you have not yet received your Calling—and *that* because you have not yet attained! Read the third chapter of S. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, mark well its

teachings, and you cannot swallow that narcotic draught.

It is said that the eagle can gaze on the sun, that on the wing he never tires, and that such is the nobleness of his flight that he is unsurpassed by aught that flies in the firmament of heaven. But, not *all at once*. He has had it all to learn and all to acquire since the time when he became an eagle. Scripture tells us of those who, as eaglets, sit close to their nest. Again it tells us of those who once had no strength, but to whom by reason of *use* strength has come, and of them it is written, "They shall mount up with wings as of eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." Oh, that it might now be so with you! And it may—it shall, if only you give your endeavours. Transmute your anxiety into force; cease from anxious inquiry, and "the rather, give diligence": so shall you "make your calling and election sure."

## VIII.

# Of the faith required for Salvation.

"I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."—Acts viii. 37.

THERE is one well-known *conception* of Faith, and that very commonly entertained, for which the most careful attention must be asked. There is need. For it is a capital matter, having many issues, and every one of them of the utmost consequence.

First, it is determinate—or is held so to be—in the case of each individual person, of that person's *salvation* as a present condition. If he has faith, after this one particular conception of it, he is saved; if he has not, he is not saved.

The next issue is this—a consequent one: that under this particular conception of faith, every congregation falls apart into *two distinct classes;* the smaller number consisting of those 'saved,' the larger—and ordinarily the far larger—being as yet out of the state of salvation. Two issues

these, having each of them very practical bearings.

And besides these is a third, much further reaching: this conception of Faith divides Christendom into two very unequal portions: the Catholic Church in all its branches past and present on the one part, which does not hold it; on the other part some modern Denominations, as represented—say, by the *Evangelical Alliance*—which do. And they indeed hold to it with the utmost tenaciousness.

Is there not here enough to make it a matter of unsurpassable importance? Add this, yet more, that challenging the ground it bars the way.

Before going further, it is required to be shown with some distinctness what the conception is which has for men such momentous issues. Here we are met with an initial difficulty—*no formula of the kind required being supplied by Holy Scripture*—they who hold to it are by no means agreed among themselves as to the exact terms in which it should be expressed. It is an easy enough thing in the mouth of any to call it 'Saving Faith'; it has been found an impossible thing to give it a formal definition which all alike can accept, and that, without requirement of less or more. But, in substance, it is this: a conscious act on the part of the awakened and penitent sinner by which in the supreme moment of faith he adventures his all on CHRIST for sal-

vation, and in that act passes from death unto life. Whatever the amount of variation, its essence in all cases is reliance, and at the same moment of time *appropriation to self* of all that is in CHRIST to be given. Simple surrender to GOD, in Him believing—which is so precious—it is not; simple Trust in CHRIST alone for Salvation—which is the burden of two of S. Paul's Epistles—it is not. The act is not effective and fulfilling, unless there be this *taking over*, which must be without doubt or misgiving. Before this act and venture of faith was made, the man urged thereto was not 'a saved man,' but was poor and blind and naked and having nothing; *now*, having made it, he is rich and full, having CHRIST and all things in Him.

This conception of 'Saving Faith' has not come to us from the Apostles. From all that has been shown, written, or done, in which there is guidance, it is conspicuously absent. In Holy Scripture there is not a solitary example of it. From the day of Pentecost downwards in the Church there is not an instance producible from the writings of the New Testament of its being required of any man for his salvation. The writings we have are chiefly those of S. Paul, and S. Paul no where lays down this faith as the faith required for salvation. There are many directions in the *way* of salvation given, but this is not one

of them. There are many of whom we read of their having passed into the *state* of salvation, but this is not the mode shown, no, not so much as by one example.

The matter is easily tested: a New Testament and a Concordance will suffice for the entire purpose. And this, which is affirmed, if tested and not disproved, is determinate of the whole matter. What is said is, that not one instance of it is to be found, whether as propounded by any Apostle, or as shown by any convert. Conclusive indeed, must this be, if true. We are but false apostles if we require any other thing than that which the Apostles required; we are but falsely guided inquirers if we are guided otherwise than as men were guided by S. Paul.

It is usually connected with some theory or exposition of the *Atonement*, as thus: 'If a man shall lay by faith his sins on CHRIST'S Head, as the priest laid his hands on the head of the scapegoat, and can summon up faith to believe that they are all borne away from him, in that act of faith they *are* borne away, and the man is a saved man.'

This is confessedly a value very proper for faith to attach to CHRIST'S Sacrifice of Himself for us (by that Sacrifice alone is He constituted a SAVIOUR): yet here again it has to be said as before—it is a conception which is conspicuously

absent from every direction given to inquiring sinners by any one of the Apostles ; and equally absent from the faith which the inquirers in all recorded instances brought, and with which the Apostles were satisfied.

If in any one case we might have been quite sure of meeting with it, that would have been in the instance of the inquiring Eunuch. He was reading, when Philip joined him, *Esaias* the Prophet, at "the place of the Scripture" where it is written, "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter": here was a *lead* given to the Atonement; and Philip, we are told, "began at the same Scripture and preached unto him JESUS." Yet that act of faith which men say is specifically required was not made. Answering to Philip's teaching, in the larger faith the Eunuch made his good confession, "I believe that Jesus CHRIST is the Son of GOD."

The truth of the matter is this: in approaching Jew or Gentile—until now indisposed to accept CHRIST—S. Paul did not cumber, nor care to cumber, faith, even *Saving Faith*, with anything extraneous to it, or which without loss might for the present be detached from it. He required nothing more than the simple belief in CHRIST, trusting this to carry all else as CHRIST became inwardly revealed. The larger truth is, the Apostles never directed the faith of the inquirers

to an act or work[1] on the part of CHRIST, but always to CHRIST *Himself* as a Person: believing in Him they were saved, not believing in Him they abode still in condemnation.

This was *their* view of 'Saving Faith.' And thus, all those who "received the word gladly," all those who "believed the things that were spoken," all Jews who believed that JESUS was the CHRIST, all Gentiles who believed that JESUS was the Son of GOD—all, all these were taken by the Apostles as having true saving faith, and were regarded by them as being fit subjects for grace through all its channels.

This—by those who teach not as the Church teaches—is not now accounted to be 'Saving Faith'; and that because it does not immediately save! The assumption is without warrant. It did not immediately save—not in the very act—in the days of the Apostles: it did not so save the Eunuch; it did not save the Jailor at Philippi; it did not save S. Paul himself—they all received the washing away of sins in Baptism; it did not save the "Three thousand" on the day of

[1] Rom. x. 9 might seem to furnish a partial exception, it is a partial exception only: the *Person* of the LORD JESUS is put first, the act or work which is so singled out second. And even if it stood first and alone, it would serve no purpose, inasmuch as the Resurrection of CHRIST is never counted as being the saving article of faith, and is never set before the inquirer for his faith to grasp.

Pentecost—"Be baptised for the remission of sins," said S. Peter; and thus they were "added to the Church," "added to the LORD," and acquired a new and blessed spiritual standing, and are spoken of as "those that were being saved." It did not save any immediately, in the very act of faith. *That* is a departure from the Apostles' doctrine.

Having this faith, faith in CHRIST as the Son of GOD, they were not bidden to add anything more to it in the way of faith, to make faith perfect. They were accounted full Scriptural believers. But to make "the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls" perfect and assured, they were bidden to add to such faith Christian *living* in all its branches: "To your faith, add"—virtue, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly-kindness, charity; "Walk after the SPIRIT, and not after the flesh"; "As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation"; "As ye have received CHRIST JESUS the LORD, so walk ye in Him." This is the full and blessed teaching of the Apostles.

That *other* account of 'Saving Faith' is not according to the Apostles; and it works unto many false ends, contrary to sound doctrine. As for example: it admits in some instances of its dissociation from the confession of CHRIST as

" my LORD and my GOD ": men who do not accept the faith of the SON being co-equal and consubstantial with the FATHER, even *they* are sometimes urged to make that act of reliance which is called 'Saving faith,' with the assurance given that they shall obtain salvation thereby.[1] Yet, according to the Apostles' doctrine CHRIST in His whole and proper Person is the alone object of faith—the very matter for faith to grasp to constitute it saving faith.

It admits of, and for many, even invites the discarding of the Sacraments of CHRIST, even that of Baptism, the initial one. Men are continually being urged — while in contempt of Baptism—to make that venture of faith for salvation, assured that they shall not fail thereof. Having made it—the word on their lips is, 'Why should they have recourse to Baptism " for the remission of sins " (which they do not believe in) when they have remission of sins *without* it, also every thing else that they care for?' Baptism being accounted a precept of CHRIST indeed, but not an ordinance necessary to salvation. Yet the Apostles, S. Peter and S. Paul, always require Baptism at the moment and show remission of sins therein.

Then again, it is accounted to be perfect and entire in itself. Men who have this 'Saving

[1] This is a matter within personal knowledge.

faith' are taught to regard themselves as having already entered into every Christian blessing, as having obtained forgiveness of all their sins, as having passed from death unto life. Hence the *jealousy* which is shown towards Sacraments and 'Works.' Whatever attention they may be inclined to give or be taught to give to these as precepts, they are earnestly besought to account themselves as having attained already to all that respects Salvation through their faith alone. Yet is this without a single example to show for it in the whole of what the Apostles have written and shown. Diametrically opposite is what the Apostles have written, "Add to your faith," "Give all diligence," "Work out your salvation": and in the doing this lies the whole value of faith —faith and that which it enters into; else are they "barren and unfruitful," branches fit only for the burning.

One is not concerned to call in question the success of this other teaching: the success is great—this may be admitted. Multitudes of careless livers have been caught and held by it. Being urged to make this one venture for the assurance of salvation, if they answer duly to the call they enter into the assurance, and are sustained by it in leading oftentimes a religious life: so have men been moved and sustained by their having been brought to believe in their own particular

election of GOD. Nothing is proved thereby. Its success is not denied. What only is said is, that it is not what S. Paul taught. Nor is the benefit reached, that which the Apostle *sought:* he did not seek to make men 'religious' (that was he, that were the Jews — many of them — while yet out of CHRIST; that may a heathen man be, fearing GOD and working righteousness): what he sought was to bring them into membership with CHRIST, and to see that membership fruit in every grace and virtue unto holiness of life.

Faith in CHRIST as taught by the Apostle is a Divinely simple thing. Every man who accounts of faith as being this, simply this, "I believe that JESUS is the CHRIST," "the SON of GOD," knows at once whether he has faith or no, whether he is a real believer or not. And this is *great gain:* whether for comfort or strength, the gain is immeasurable. The man is set at rest from inward perturbations and anxious questionings of his spirit. He knows what he has to do. Being baptised, a straight course is before him. "Add to your faith virtue"; "Walk after the SPIRIT, and not after the flesh." Let faith realise itself; "By faith conquer"; "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith—believing that JESUS is the SON of GOD," with power to uphold and to succour all that are weak and tempted.

But let the *other* conception of faith prevail in the congregation, and men fall into self-questionings and continue in them. They pray for faith, they hope and wait. They pray earnestly, and still they wait: thus casting upon GOD the *onus* of their sinful carnal condition; when, in truth, the fault, the whole fault, the fault in every respect, is their own and is resting upon themselves alone. Alas! they have received a teaching which is not of the Apostles, nor is in any agreement with that of the Apostles; and therefore they know not the blessedness, the strength for them, that lies in that little word, "I believe that JESUS CHRIST is the SON of GOD."

## IX.

# Believers and 'Unbelievers.'

"According to my Gospel."—Rom. II. 16.

WHATEVER called forth from S. Paul this somewhat admonitory phrase, "according to my Gospel," there can be no question as to the need of some admonition now; and that, wherever the English tongue is spoken. There are comparatively few, even among ourselves, who receive the Gospel according to S. Paul; and very many who are preachers of "another" gospel, not according to S. Paul. Many instances of such departure have been shown; to them there is now to be added yet one more.

If *the Believers* in any present-day congregation were asked to signify themselves by their holding up the right hand, the Believers who accounted themselves such would be seen to form but a woeful minority. In some congregations ten hands would hang down for every hand that went up. Let the like token have been asked for in the

Churches planted by the Apostle, and an entirely different scene would have presented itself. In the Church of Corinth every hand would have gone up; in the Church of Galatia every hand would have gone up; in the Church of Ephesus, and again in that of Crete every hand would have been held up.

What is *the meaning* of this great difference? The answer is simple and ample. S. Paul addressed all the congregation, all who were in any sense Christians, as Believers; and by the word 'unbeliever,' whenever he used it, always meant it of one who was either a Jew or a heathen. This was always *his* use of these words, and of all cognate words. He never spoke of any Christian whatever as being *an unbeliever*.

It is a very serious matter, for it is a very practical matter. We have absolutely no right to differ from S. Paul, whether in the teaching that we give, or in the teaching that we receive. It is a practical matter and not merely a verbal one, because as a man thinks so he will act; what a man *accounts* himself to be, that he will *endeavour* to be: any received idea has the power and the constant habit of realising itself. Account yourselves Believers, in the full Scriptural sense of the word, to whom such glorious promises are made, and of whom such high things are expected; account yourselves Children of God—as S. Paul

says you are, and Members of CHRIST—as again S. Paul says you are, and in proportion as you are true men you will strive to realise all this in action and in life; and *striving* to do it you will accomplish it also. But reckon yourselves among *the unbelievers*, as having no present portion in CHRIST, as being without GOD in the world; and if this has not an enervating effect, a deadening effect, then I do not know what human nature is, and I have misread all the lessons of history. Therefore is it said that this is a highly practical matter, and one of very grave consequence: and no apology is made for my trying, by every means that I know of, and with language as incisive and strenuous as any I can command, to bring it well home.

Patience, then, and forbearance are craved, while some reference is made (without offence, if it may be) to that which will most effectively illustrate the matter in hand. Within a half-mile of the parish church in every town or city of the Kingdom, at seven o'clock on Sunday evenings, are assembled some half-dozen congregations, in which this distinction is maintained and kept borne in the minds of all, and that by very available means. In them all, there is first a little circle of 'believers'; and outside the elect circle, and in larger numbers, 'the unbelievers'—so accounted, and therefore so accounting themselves.

The hymns, the prayers, the sermons, are all built up on this distinction; they all alike enforce and require it. There are, in the books used, hymns for 'the believers' to sing, and hymns to be sung for 'the unbelievers'; there are, in the prayers made, petitions for 'the believers,' and petitions for 'the unbelievers'; and the sermon is addressed, now to 'the believers,' and now to 'the unbelievers.' And yet, this distinction was never recognised by S. Paul, and is clean contrary to the teaching of S. Paul. S. Paul did not know of there being a class of *unbelievers* in the congregation. In all his Epistles he addressed all in common, and he addressed them as believers, always—whatever variety of personal character was to be found among them: and he limited his use of the term "unbelievers" or "unbelieving" exclusively to Jews and heathens.

At the risk of its being felt to be tedious, let some leading examples be here given of the Scripture usage of the word; and these, for the most part taken from S. Paul. He says, "Brother goeth to law with brother, and that before *the unbelievers*": that is, before the heathen Romans. He says, "If any brother hath a wife that *believeth not*, let him not put her away"; "and the woman which hath an husband that *believeth not*, let her not leave him": that is, those united in marriage before the one of them had become Christian,

are not to separate at the instance of the one believing; "but, if *the unbelieving* depart, let him depart." All those who have not yet entered into this bond, he charges, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with *unbelievers*: for what concord hath CHRIST with Belial? or what part hath he that *believeth* with an infidel?" that is, with one who doth not receive the faith. He says of "tongues," that they are for a sign, "not to them that *believe*, but to them that *believe not*": that is, not to Christians, but to unbelieving Jews or Gentiles. He says, "If the whole Church be come together unto one place, and there come in those that are unlearned or *unbelievers*": that is, those that would say of them speaking with tongues, "ye are mad"; or otherwise, those who have not received the faith of CHRIST. To S. Paul, at Jerusalem, it was said, "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which *believe*": that is, believe that JESUS is the CHRIST. "But, as touching the Gentiles which *believe*," that is, believe that JESUS is the SON of GOD, another course is determined. He says, speaking of servants, "They that have *believing* masters," that is, masters who had accepted the faith—not heathen Gentiles, nor unbelieving Jews. He says to his son Timothy, "If any man or woman that *believeth* hath widows, let him relieve them, that the Church be not charged": that is, if any

Christian hath such. He says to him personally —he being their Bishop—and "be thou an example of *the believers*," that is, of those touching whom he is instructed of the Apostle, "how to behave himself" as towards them: to "rebuke before all them that sin"; "in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves," entreating and exhorting "with all long-suffering and doctrine." And of himself, S. Paul says, "Ye are witnesses, and GOD also, how holily and righteously and unblamably we behaved ourselves toward you that *believe*": that is, all that had need of the stirring example, and his word of exhortation given, "that ye walk worthy of GOD Who hath called you unto His Kingdom and glory."

So it is throughout. The Apostle always uses these terms in this one sense: never does he use them in any other sense—never in that which is in vogue now. If there should seem to be a possible exception it would be found in his Epistle to Titus, where he says, "Unto them that are defiled and *unbelieving* is nothing pure": and if an exception—which is more than can be affirmed—it is the exception which proves the rule. No one has any right to call his brother 'an unbeliever' because he is a sinful man. No one can plead S. Paul as an example for his doing so. S. Paul never counted baptised sinners unbelievers: he always, in every Epistle, addresses such as

Believers; and urges and requires of them that they so walk "as becometh saints," "as it becometh the Gospel," "as becometh their high calling in CHRIST JESUS our LORD."

Not "without weeping," would the Apostle, if for one day he were amongst us, be able to look upon the lack-lustre eyes of the many in our congregations, who receive not his glowing incitements to a holy life—those which he willed to be given us—the remindings of grace received and to be accounted for, the promises of high and blessed things to be won, and the admonitions not to fail of the grace of GOD—without which their hearts are not to be touched, nor their consciences reached—because they account them as addressed to the Believers (as indeed they are), and not to their own selves.

To have changed the Apostle's word as towards these, to have reckoned them among the unbelievers whom S. Paul ever accounted as being of the number of Believers, is an offence against the faith of CHRIST which of necessity must have dire consequences. Its first and inevitable result has been to bar the Apostle's exhortations from *reaching* where there is most need of them, and to draw them away all into one little narrow channel where the need is least. These, most of all, require the Apostle's exhortations, and *only in one character can they receive them.* Only a Christian

man is chargeable with Christian obligations; only a man who has received his calling can be held answerable for fulfilling the duties of that calling; only a Believer can feel his obligation to walk as Believers are bidden to walk: no unbeliever can.

To all the Congregation—and to the sinning and erring with special force of application—S. Paul says, "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, seeing we have these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of GOD." We cannot, if we follow the preachers of the other doctrine, bring this to bear upon all the baptised: only by following S. Paul we can.

This changing the Apostle's word (calling them 'unbelievers' whom he calls 'believers') has not a ground of justification in any supposed change of character in the present constituents of the congregation. There were sinners in the Church of Corinth, sinners in the Church of Colossæ, sinners in the Churches of Galatia; and them S. Paul admonished, exhorted, entreated: but never did he call them 'unbelievers.' There were sinners in the Church of Ephesus, over which he set S. Timothy as Bishop, and them he bade Timothy rebuke, "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear"; and "be thyself

a pattern," he says, "to the believers." There were sinners in the Church of Crete, over which in like manner he set S. Titus; as one of their own poets had said, "The Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies"—"this witness is true," testifies the Apostle, "wherefore rebuke them sharply." And of *all* his children, showing manifold diversities of character, he says, "Ye are witnesses, and GOD also, how holily and righteously and unblamably we behaved ourselves toward *you that believe:* as ye know how we dealt with each one of you, as a father with his own children, exhorting you and encouraging you, and testifying, to the end that ye should walk worthily of GOD Who called you into His own Kingdom and glory." That is, in S. Paul's use of the word, *all the congregation* were Believers, every one of them: only the Gentiles yet heathen, or the Jews who still rejected CHRIST were unbelievers.

Besides and beyond, however, the short-comers, the backsliders in heart, the indifferent livers among "the brethren," who continued in church attendance, and whom the Apostle kept well in hand, there was a 'residuum' even in the days of S. Paul—those, namely, who had broken away from him, despite all expostulations and protestations; whom he could not speak of, as he tells us "without weeping": yet were these—even these—a class quite distinct from the unbelievers, Jew

or Gentile. By Faith and Baptism they were of the Household of GOD, the shame of their own community. If *unbelievers* they had been, the shame had been less, and the Apostle's language had been less condemnatory: nay, in that case he would not have concerned himself with them—"Do ye not judge them that are *within?* but them that are without GOD judgeth."

In our days, no doubt, the residuum, as reckoned by number, is greater; yet who shall say that they are what they are by their own fault alone, and not also in part by ours? If, then, we follow S. Paul we shall not account even these as *unbelievers*. He did not. With him we shall try the better way to win them and pursue the better plan—"strengthen the things that remain"; we shall try to recover them for CHRIST, and abandon no vantage ground which S. Paul holds for our doing so.

Of the Congregation ordinarily assembling, of you, and such as you, I am more careful to say this—and, following S. Paul, to say it absolutely and without exception—You are all, every one of you, Believers, and by S. Paul so accounted. Not all, indeed, are believers in the modern, denominational sense; but then S. Paul did not know and did not recognise the modern denominational sense in determining who were Believers. S. Paul counted all as Believers who "received the word"

preached, who "believed the things that were spoken": all Jews who believed that JESUS was the CHRIST; all Gentiles who believed that JESUS was the SON of GOD. All who received from the Apostle "the form of sound words," that is, all who could make confession of their faith in the words of the Apostles' Creed—all these, being baptised, were (and are) Believers in the full sense of the Apostle's word.

"According to his Gospel," these all received—as he himself did—remission of their sins in Baptism, wherein their old sin was "purged from" them, and was "washed away." And ever thenceforth they are bidden to walk in newness of life. "New Creatures" are they "in CHRIST JESUS." "Born again of water and the SPIRIT," they "have put on CHRIST," "as many as were baptised" into Him: and are subjects thenceforth of the Apostle's exhortation (given them to make their calling and election sure)—"that ye *put off* the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind: and that ye *put on* the new man, which after GOD is created in righteousness and true holiness." Such is the Gospel "according to S. Paul"; such are his "ways which be in CHRIST."

X.

# A Plea for the Congregation.

"I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal; even as unto babes in Christ."—1 Cor. iii. 1.

THERE is a question to be asked: Are "babes in Christ" *Christians?* Let it be allowed that they are, then is there more to say and the worth while.

A most prolific source of daily mischief and distress is, and has long been, the inflated description given of the Christian man. It has seemed a fine thing, and a thing in honour of God, to run it up to a great height. More rightly would it be accounted as being exactly the reverse. One knows, indeed, that a speaker wins praise, and is said to give 'a high tone' to the debate—say, at a Church Congress—or, if he be in the pulpit, to the sermon, if his command of language enables him to sketch and fill in duly the traits and the features of a very perfect character. The hearers follow him with admiration; yet, when they come down, as they must, into the common life

of men they no longer find the admiration to give. For men—even Christian men—do not in the common run answer to the description. The hearers are perfectly conscious that they themselves do not; and they find around them few that do. Untold mischiefs arise from such overwrought descriptions.

The truth is, it is not description at all, it is model drawing. It is just the same sort of mistake as would be made, if, professing to draw and set forth *a man* you were to make him six feet two, and fill out forty-five inches in chest measurement, and with that invest him with every grace of person. So, men would be few: you would not meet them at every corner; you would not recognise your fellows as 'men,' they would be something less. The truth is, as was said before (and here it would be acknowledged), it is not description at all; it is model drawing. Drawing is of two kinds: it is either for description, that seeing men you may perceive them to be such; or, it is what can be set before artists and sculptors as worthy of being copied. In other words, it is either the actual or the ideal that is in view: the actual we meet in every street, at every turn; the ideal but seldom. Not every one is an Apollo; not every one is even an athlete. Men, and preachers not least, confuse these two together. There is a want of straight thinking; or men have fallen

into ruts and do not get out of them—they do not think for themselves at all.

The mischief is great; in this instance it is very great. Men—people in large numbers—have come not to think themselves Christians; in fact, to think themselves *not* Christians, because they are well and truly conscious that they do not answer to the description. They are logical: if the description is right, they are not Christians.

The mischief—the grievous mischief—may not at once appear to every one. Let me try to make it appear. Nothing that is read or preached comes home to them, because *they are not the persons* to whom it is said, of whom it is said. For if there be one fact more certain than another, it is that, except what CHRIST is said to have spoken to the Jews, or on the other hand the few brief reports of sermons which the Apostles delivered to heathen Gentiles, all the words of the New Testament are addressed only to *Christians;* and are intended for them, and them only. Not a single Epistle was addressed to any other than Christians, or is intended for any other than Christians. When, then, the words of Holy Writ—words of counsel, of comfort, and of rebuke are read in the congregation, all those persons in the congregation who are *not* Christians are not the persons spoken of or spoken to. We who preach in the congregation follow the same rule;

necessarily we do: taking a text from the Gospels of words which CHRIST spake unto His disciples, or else from the Epistles of words which the Apostles addressed to the Christians, we address only such—we *can* address only such in these words. Therefore our words fall short; they do not come home. They do not reach just where the need is greatest that they should reach. Those who are the hearers and yet are not Christians, are not the persons spoken of or spoken to. They come if they like, and they go as they come; but the spur is off, and the bridle is off. And though it be quite true that we do somehow intend that those who are not Christians (that is, by the description not allowed to be) shall receive our Christian exhortations, it is at the expense of our logic we do it; and the mischief is not undone. For, only a Christian man is bound to live as a Christian, or can be laid under Christian obligations.

And the cases of distress, also—these are exceedingly numerous: for there are many, many who are found Sunday after Sunday presenting themselves in the Congregation of the LORD who, having learned much of "this way," are sincerely desirous, are willing—aye, willing to do aught—wish nothing so much as to enter in, and to have a right to all Christian privileges; yet are *withheld* from what all their desire is unto, because they are

not the persons—they do not answer to the description; as reckoned by it they are not Christians. 'Would to GOD that they were!' how many a heart-ache would they have the less! how sweetly would they sleep on the pillow of their bed, now often wet with tears!

Draw the picture as lovely and as perfect as you can; let there be no flaw in it, no sin; make it full of truth and grace; set it up on high; let it be for men to copy—only, let it be known that this is *the purpose* of the drawing; and let it be known also that it is the picture of *One*, of One only as yet; and you do well: but men have a deal to answer for who offer this as description, showing us who is a Christian man.

They forget, these unwise teachers do, that there be some who are *fine* men, and some who in comparison are but mean specimens of humanity; some hills which tower aloft and their heads are crowned with snow glistening always white, and some over which you might cast a stone. They forget that some rivers there be like the mighty Amazon or the Mississippi which could carry all the ships of civilised states on the broad expanse of their open bosom, and some across which a child might wade; and that these are *the same*—now at their birth, now as they gather volume and run swift and strong, now at their launching forth from land, into the great and mighty ocean which

receives them all, nor asks whither they have come, or out of what littleness they had their beginning.

Our poor brethren are logical indeed: giving heed to the description, they are *not* Christians. Yet are they without excuse—all are without excuse in this sad tragedy of errors. If only they would have heeded S. Paul! if even they would now heed the Apostolic writings, they would learn and learn at once what the truth of this matter is.—The description is of *One*, of One in His Beauty, unto Whom all may look, and all may hope to come somewhere near; and the nearer, may hope to come nearer still. But of those who are called by His Name, the variety shown is infinite in its gradations: from the "carnal" and disorderly who "walk as men," reaching unto the great Apostle himself; who called them his "little children," and "babes in CHRIST," and as a father was "affectionately desirous" of them, and chid them for each fault, and used sharpness as need required, and pointed the better way for graces to be acquired, for virtues to be added: in the hope that at some distant Day—a Day not numbered among days on earth—he might present them faultless before the Throne.

"Who is the Christian?" (Here, then is a sample.) "The Christian is a disciple of JESUS CHRIST our LORD. He is a man who believes

with all his heart in JESUS CHRIST as his Redeemer and Saviour. He is a man who belongs, out and out, and all through, to Him, and exists for His ends. Bought with a price and brought to own and realise that he is bought, he lives no longer to himself. Whether he lives, he lives unto the LORD; and whether he dies, he dies unto the LORD. And all that he is, and of course with it, all that he has, is appropriated and annexed by his Master, CHRIST, his King Who has saved him, and is concentrated on His purposes, His service, His glorification . . . Such is the true Christian, the New Testament Christian. This is not the higher Christian life. It is the Christian life."—Why this is the full stature! Do men come to the full stature in a day? Are there none but those who can look down from a height of six feet? Is there but one stature of those which be in CHRIST? are there no "babes in CHRIST"?

I am afraid that if you had heard these words at the last Church Congress[1] spoken by an eminent Cambridge Professor and the Principal of a Theological Hall, you would have been persuaded that you were not Christians—not yet Christians: and yet, you would have been persuaded of what is quite beside the truth, and to the truth is most treacherous.

There is another saddest mischief—yes, sadder

[1] (1889).

even than what has been seen—attending such a description. If those are *not* Christians who do not answer to the description, then also those who *are* Christians—or have the faith that they are—must hold and are upheld in their holding, that they *do* answer to the description: complacently they take over to them the inflated description that is given of them and believe it of themselves. And thus there is double mischief: but this, last and greatest. Nay, mischief which is last for *them* does not end with them: their brethren of low degree who have not arrived at such a pitch of faith in themselves they sit down, waiting, expecting—sometimes praying, sometimes ceasing to pray—till, by one turn of His grace it shall please GOD to make them Christians. Alas! Alas!

Oh, that it were frankly and fully acknowledged—as it is frankly and fully taught in the Epistles—that We *all* are "in CHRIST," "so many of us as were baptised into CHRIST"; but *some* "as babes" only, and often found "carnal," needing much correction; and as "little children," wavering and unstedfast, our faith also needing sometimes to be reproved: that it were frankly and fully acknowledged — as it is frankly and fully taught by the Apostles—that ours is a Salvation, (that on which we are entered) which needs to be worked out, and worked out by *us*, to the acquisition of every grace; and ours a faith, which

even when it is unreprovable has yet need of all virtues to be added to it, and that we "who have obtained like precious faith with them" are to add them, thereto "giving all diligence": that—in a word—it is the *beginning* that we are conducted to and have entered upon with gifts, and not the finished grace; and that for the rest we are to be "good stewards of the manifold grace of GOD," stirring up the Gift of GOD which is within us, "that we receive not the Grace of GOD in vain."

## XI.

# Members and Non-members.

"By one Spirit are we all baptised into one Body."—1 Cor. xii. 13.

MEN who have any intimate acquaintance with what is called 'The Religious World' are very familiar with much said—and are perhaps impressed by the fact of there being so much to be said—about Members and Membership, and the Admission of members and the Modes of admission, relative to particular Denominations. And if, as well, they have some inner knowledge, they are aware that each Congregation of every such Denomination is made up of Members and Non-members. And some very curious questions not infrequently arise, to be variously determined, or sometimes to be left undetermined—and that for reasons which carry weight. Such questions, for example, as these: 'At what age may children be received as members?' 'In what relation do children, the children of members, stand towards

the Body?'[1] These questions, being practical questions, are much discussed. If suffered to fall into silence for awhile, because there is no prospect of unanimity of agreement, they crop up again and again; and they press for an answer. They are recurrent, every new generation revives them.

Now in one place there is very singularly a total absence of such questions: they are never asked; they are never debated; it never comes into any one's mind to raise them: that is, in the Church.

But in yet another place, this very singular absence is found: that is, in the Bible. In the Christian writings of the New Testament these questions find no quarter: they are never raised; it does not appear that it ever came into any one's mind to raise them.

The difference—so absolute—is very remarkable. When it is borne in mind how practical the matter is for all, out of which these questions arise; and further, as respects children in particular, how intensely interesting the questions are, and must be to every parent, the difference must strike us as being a very remarkable difference.

I believe that patient honest thought, if only it were given, would greatly help towards clearing away many of the differences which are at present so numerous among Christians, and which have

[1] *e.g.*, Professor Agar Beet, in the *British Weekly*.

seemed to be so sadly obstinate. Some higher—higher, and yet deeper, *underlying*—truths would come home and be received with joy, if only we gave diligent heed to seek out indications of them: and I believe the time for it has come. It becomes thus a proper and fitting thing that we should follow this particular difference, and try to see what more can be learnt about it.

*The case*, then, at present stands thus: that, whereas in the various religious Denominations of our day there is much debate from time to time—and debate not yet ended—touching Membership, Members and Non-members, touching children particularly; in the Apostolic Churches there was none. Why? Let us ask why. It cannot be that the questions of this kind now arising and debated, are *unimportant*, and therefore were left undealt with. That, at least, cannot be. They are most important, most practical and pressing. It must be because they were *determined;* and determined by that which was known—known in every congregation.

What is found touching the matter is this: that CHRIST the Head of the Church ordained Baptism as the means whereby the Apostles should admit into His Church "all nations": it was a command with promise, "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved." From the day of Pentecost onwards the Apostles acted on this command, on

that first same day baptising so many as three thousand souls, and giving them the promise. And of them and others coming after them, it is written, "And the LORD added to them day by day those that were being saved." So "the churches increased in number daily," and all nations received the gift. Next, writing to these Churches, S. Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, addressed all as "in CHRIST": for, he tells them, they "were baptised into CHRIST," and "As many of you as were baptised into CHRIST did put on CHRIST." And so, agreeably to what CHRIST had said of the SPIRIT—"of water and the SPIRIT"—he says, "By one SPIRIT are we all baptised into one Body."

This, in brief, is what so far we find. But what we do *not* find is equally remarkable. We never find one admitted into the Church but by Baptism. We never find any other mode of admission spoken of or even hinted at, whether for parents or children. Among the Jews, Circumcision was the mode appointed for all, parents and children. Among Christians, Baptism is the mode appointed for all, parents and children. Indeed, Baptism is called our Christian circumcision, marking out, by the grace which is of CHRIST, its superiority over that "made with hands"; and the promise of "some better thing" attached to Baptism by our LORD as also by His Apostles, is extended to all,

parents and children—"the promise is unto you and to your children." We do not find any exclusion of children: we do find instances, in which we may well and rightly think, that in fact as well as in promise, they were included. Thus, when the Philippian Jailor was baptised, it is significantly written of such Baptism, "He, and all his, straightway"; when Lydia was baptised, with equal significance, "She, and her household."

Nothing is being here assumed, nothing is being taken for granted: neither the grace of Baptism—otherwise than as it is expressed by the Apostles; nor the presence of children in the whole families baptised—otherwise than as such expressions of fact may seem to include them. It is quite open for any one to believe, with what satisfaction he can, that the particular families spoken of were made up of servants only, or nephews and nieces, and if in any part children then all grown up. After a like manner, it is quite open to any one to maintain that "the promise is unto you and to your children," simply means, 'you for the present, and your children afterwards, when they are no longer children in years.'

And still, a very important fact remains—it is what is found further—that from this time forth, parents and children are addressed *in common* by the Apostles: the parents charged to bring up their children "in the nurture and admonition of

the LORD"; the children, even "little children,"[1] addressed as already partakers in common with their parents of every Christian grace and privilege, without distinction made of any kind. This well and truly thought out answers all questions.

A second important fact remains, equal in evidential value to the one just stated, relative to the matter now in hand: it is, indeed, its corollary —that which in reason follows. It is this, that in the whole course of the Christian Scriptures there is not (further than we have seen) any word, of whatever kind, said as touching membership, and none in particular as regards children. Those anxious perplexities, common now to both pastors and parents were then unknown; just as in the Church they are unknown still. 'At what *age* should children be admitted to membership?' and 'In what *manner?*' are questions which never entered into the mind of a Christian to ask, any more than they enter into our minds now. And the question, stranger still (almost grotesque in its strangeness), 'In what relation do baptised children stand to the Church of which the parents are members?'—now so much debated in certain quarters, *that* also was never asked. Granted that, which the Apostle assumes of children, it never could have been asked. S. Paul, like S. John,

[1] 1 S. John ii. 13, *παιδία*; as in S. Mark x. 13.

addresses parents and children in common, as partakers of the same grace; giving exhortation, counsel, and comfort to both alike, making no difference. The relation was a *common* relation: "By one SPIRIT are we all baptised unto one Body." The Apostles knew no other relation; never (so far as they have enabled us to gather) conceived of any other as possible.

But there is another part of the matter on which something has to be said: *Members and Non-members* in the congregation, both being baptised, is equally unexampled. It was never found in the Apostolic Churches; in the Church it is not found now. Sinners were found in all the Churches; and they were put to rebuke by the Apostle, and if need were to penance. Sinners are found now. But the carnal and the disorderly were counted as Members still: *only* on that ground did the Apostle assume to deal with them, claiming them as "brethren"—erring brethren—and exercising his office which he had received of the LORD on their behalf. They were "within," and so judged: "them that are without, GOD judgeth." It is so still. And it is so, on the one ground that is common to all: "As many of us as were baptised into CHRIST did put on CHRIST"—all have come under His yoke.

This alters our conceptions of the relations in which we stand as towards CHRIST and His Church

very considerably. It *rights* them in the eyes of the Apostle, that so we may receive and follow his teaching. We are "in CHRIST," so he says; we are "within," so he says; and have need, urgent need, to "work out" our salvation "with fear and trembling," giving thereto "all diligence": it is our only need. Infinitely more helpful and stimulating it is than that commonly found, which sets us "without"; waiting passively, expecting, till One in His mercy sees fit to move us and to invest us with a salvation which already we have received, and which being unmindful of we are now neglecting. Infinitely more stimulating indeed, and also infinitely truer: it sets us in line with the Apostles and their teaching of men, "Exhorting, and testifying that this is the true Grace of GOD wherein ye stand." "As ye have received CHRIST JESUS the LORD, so walk ye in Him." *This* sets us on our feet, and stirs us into action. Men live by it, knowing their responsibility, confessing their obligation. *That* paralyses, it is torpor and death. "Wherefore the rather, brethren, Give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things ye shall never fall. For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST."

XII.

# A Plea for the Little Children.

"Of such is the Kingdom of God."—S. Luke xviii. 16.

CHRIST'S love for little children has great lessons for us; and from it we may receive also theological learning—perhaps truer than that which we, some of us, have received of men. If Christ could take up the little ones, even babes,[1] into His arms, and solemnly bless them, then is it conclusive evidence that they, even as babes, can *receive* blessing. If He could solemnly declare of such, in the presence of His disciples, "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven," then is it certain evidence again, that the Kingdom of Heaven is of such now—that infants as well as adults belong to it, and have it belonging unto them. If Christ could say, looking round and making comparison, "Except ye be converted"—"Except ye turn and become as little children, ye shall not enter into

[1] βρέφη, verse 15.

the Kingdom of Heaven," then is it certain, quite certain, that they *do* enter in; and certain, also, that adults have a less—a less, and not a greater—degree of fitness than what is found in them, for present entry into that Kingdom which is the Kingdom of GOD upon earth, "the Church which is His Body," "the Habitation which He hath builded for Himself through the SPIRIT." Then of *children*, as well as adults, it is written, "By one SPIRIT are we all baptised into one Body."

There is a deal of grudging of little children that they should be admitted into this grace. There was, the first time the little ones were "brought" to CHRIST that He should bless them—grudging heard in the same murmurs. And we may even thank it. For we owe to it that this precious Scripture is written, "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not"; which should cover the evil un-Christ-like spirit with shame, and awe it into silence.

But this is not the matter I want to have out.

This grudging of little children follows them all the way up. They are judged by a standard which is not their own, but belongs to age and experience and knowledge and mature life. By that standard, because they fail to touch it, they are condemned; and occasion is taken, both to cast doubt on the grace in which they stand in CHRIST, and also to make them early partakers of

the same evil doubt—to the end that they may sometime follow those who much rather have need that they now follow them!

If in any creature there are all the elements of religion, love, joy, hope, fear, they are in the heart and mind of a little child. They are there full-born: ready to respond to any Christian touch; and take form, and shape, and colour, and tone, in ways which might delight angels. But they wait for words, for expression, and for interpretation. They wait for the hand which can play on an instrument so sensitive, so delicately tender, and true and sweet as is the heart of a little child. Children are children; they cannot give expression in words which only the older people have learned. Nor should they; that would be worse, not better: better that they should abide in a sweet simplicity, and be children still for so long as they may.

They come to Church in troops, their faces wreathed with smiles; they finger the books; their arms reach out, why or wherefore cannot be told; their feet go swing under the seat. It is even so: for they are children; when they cease to be children, they will cease to have children's ways. The old mothers of the woolly flock browse in the pasture very sedately, intent upon their feeding; but the lambs are more alive to what goes on around them. A smile is often on this one's face, when it is not on yours. It should not

be on yours. It *may* be on theirs, and be there without rebuke. With them, much of this is purely physical and involuntary—an element so active in them that it cannot always be repressed, if even they think and try. But now, before you condemn, and that you may consider whether it is even tolerably safe, I should like to take off the cover of your mind, and see what goes on there in any one half-hour in church, and that under a very solemn looking face: Your thoughts, the occupation of them, What are they? All so true to time and place? all so free from thought of pleasure or gain? all so pure? Are they! Perhaps you will pursue this no further.

They kneel, when other people do (perhaps when some other people *don't*); they stand, when other people stand. They join in the prayers, and in the hymns. They sing with their lips: often their understanding is unfruitful, their spirit is unfruitful. But—What is this! does not S. Paul say, "I will sing with the spirit; I will sing with the understanding also"? Yes, he says it to *you*. Yet there is Another Who says something too; and He says it of *them*. They sing "with the best member" that they have—and He Who seeth not as man seeth, says "Perfected praise." He said it once, as the little ones sang in His train, as He made His lowly triumph-march to the Temple; and He says it now. Our praise is sadly marred;

never is it perfect: but theirs, though it be of a lower kind, is "perfected praise." Only of them, "babes and sucklings," can it be said; and ungrudgingly He says it.

Out of church, their delight is in play more than in prayer. And, if you find stowed away under their piece of work, or in the pocket of their coat, or perhaps under the pillow of their bed, a book, it is *Jack the Giant Killer*, or *Cinderella and the Glass Slipper*, or some other foolish book; much more likely than that it should be GOD'S Holy Book. Very likely. What, then? Consider, before you trust yourself to make reply. Your business, as their play—in what relation does it stand to your prayer, as judged by measure of heed given thereto? Foolish and hurtful books! do none of you find delight in them, more than in David's Psalms, on your knees, beside your bed?

But they have faults, these "regenerate" children have *sins!* They have, for they were not born of Angels; and the old Adam is strong in them, and waxes stronger with each year that is added. Every fault that is known is wrapped up in the heart of a child; and the fault will swell, and burst its shield, and outwardly appear. It will. What, then? doth not "the infection of nature remain even in the regenerate"? Does not S. Paul bid Christian people that be "in CHRIST," and in being baptised "have put on CHRIST"—does he not

bid them, and bid them still, to "put off the old man with his deeds," and to put on the new man which is after God in righteousness and true holiness? Does he find them without fault, or "rebuke them" for no sin? People professing religion, who have not faults, or think they have none, do not know themselves; neither do they know the teaching of S. Paul. People have faults that they may overcome them: this is not the work of the Gift of Grace given us in the beginning; it is the work—the occupation—of the Christian life, begun in us in order that we may strive and overcome. Let those cast a stone at little children, who have no sins of their own to repent of: and those that have none—if such there be—will be the last to do it, knowing out of what a fiery strife they have come. For me, I would rather sin with the little children, than cast the stone; for the sin is greater. "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones," "which believe in Me"; "for I say unto you, that in Heaven their Angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in Heaven." Than that a man should offend one of such little ones, "it were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

Very much more there is waiting to be said; but let it wait. Yet, now, very seriously: You *do offend* these little ones, you do cause them to

stumble, as often as you cast doubt on their Standing in Grace, in CHRIST. There is no more effectual way by which their stumbling may be insured. You set a snare for their feet: many fall into it, and are taken—"These little ones which believe in Me," Will they ever be believing again?

What CHRIST vouches for, we may surely accept. What He so ungrudgingly accords to them, we too may give. They are Believers in Him: they are, if any are. They are the choicer part of the Church, and perhaps its better half: they are the more simply-believing part; they are the part that is most without guile. The Kingdom of Heaven is of such: "little children" or "as little children" must we be before we can enter therein. They are the lambs of CHRIST'S flock; which He commands us to shepherd with care, and to feed with food convenient for them. They are "babes in CHRIST," to be fed with milk, and not with strong meat. If in any measure they are "yet carnal," so, too, are some of you—"not spiritual but yet carnal." Do not then deny the grace, or you deny it for yourselves. They are "the young plants": if they grow, and grow strong and true for Him, it is all that you may at present look for. Train them, give them right direction: they are in your hands. As you find them, they are much infected with evil: weeds

spring up thick and fast around them; also, they do not bear fruit. Let all this be true. GOD does not *expect* them to bear fruit; no, not yet. Weeds there are, and faults with which they are much infested: just here lies all present work; theirs and yours, O Christian Parents! The young plants, the tender vines, the budding branches, You do not look for fruit from these: you look for the rank growths, that you may stop them, ere they draw off the strength. You look for parasites that would make them a prey, the green fly, the red spider—you look for these. You look for filth, that you may clear it away, before it eats into the sweet young life. So with your children. Keep them clean: keep them sweet and pure for CHRIST; keep them that they may become strong for Him: *then* will they be in Him fruitful branches; then will our Heavenly Father be glorified; then will they bear "much fruit."

## XIII.

# Sheep and Goats.

"So shall it be at the end of the world: the Angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just."—S. Matt. xiii. 49.

THAT in the Church in its earthly estate, the evil are ever mingled with the good is a fact which none can doubt. But we may mistake it. We may lose much of the richness which a truth —even such as this—has for us, provided we follow it out, and avoid rocks and shoals. Thus, if we say that the evil and the good in the Church always appear in two classes: the evil all evil, the good all good; we do greatly err and misrepresent the case. So saying, we fall into two errors of statement: (1) in the Church there are not two classes; and (2) in the Church, the evil are not all evil—one alone is thus evil, "the Evil One"; and the good are not all good—"One is good, that is God."

It is a common thing, and a convenient thing, no doubt, to speak of there being 'two classes'

in the Congregation: one striving, and one not striving; one obedient, and one not obedient; one fruitful, and one not fruitful. It is both a common and a convenient thing to do. But if we wish to be severely true and quite accurate, such a classification as this will not lie and is therefore not available. There are *not* two such classes in the Congregation; neither as manifest and clearly defined, nor even as existing. This representation is an erring one in two respects: in respect, that is, both of excess and defect—it goes too far, and it goes not far enough.

For all men baptised into CHRIST there are *two relations*, in which to be viewed, by which to be judged: one as toward GOD, in respect of grace given—grace and calling; the other as toward the life lived, in respect of gain made—gain and progress. In short, a spiritual one, and a moral one. (1) *A spiritual* one, by a spiritual instrument: "By one SPIRIT are we all baptised into one Body." There we stand together, the ground is common; we all are members, members one of another; members of CHRIST, members of one Body: not one in any respect before another, but all equal; all one. And so the Apostle, after praising some, and blaming some, says—and what he says is the simplest truth—"Ye are all one in CHRIST JESUS." In respect of this, the common classification goes too far: there are

not two classes; there is *one* class, one only.

But there is another relation, in which men are to be viewed—that as toward the life they show, indicating "whereunto we have attained." That is to say (2) the *moral* one. Here, the members are not all on one level; no, nor on two levels, but on levels almost as numerous as the individuals be. And here, there are not 'two classes.' Here, what is commonly said is erring by defect, in not going far enough. Men do not grow in grace in classes; nor do they decline from grace in classes, but as units. Each one has thus his own standing, his own particular level: and this is shared by none; even in him it varies from day to day.

What shows the truth, the exact and whole truth of the matter, is that figure which S. Paul makes use of—the figure of *a race*. This has the very serviceable advantage of taking in and of showing the two aspects: the one which is common to all, the other which is different in all—so harmonising both. In a race all have *entered* as runners, that is, all have to whom S. Paul writes Letters: so far, all are equal; all are accepted as runners, all are bidden to run. And so far there are not two classes, but one class. But, now, mark the *running*, mark it in the Christian course. One is at the head, one or more; and many are found at every foot of ground between the starting-post and the

goal—straining singly, straining onwards; and more or less every one divided from his fellows: while many, though entered equally with the rest, are found abiding at the starting-point; not outstripped and distanced only by the fleeter runners, but having as yet made no motion forwards. (At this point, as the Apostle observes, the parallel ceases to be one: for in the earthly race, "one receiveth the prize," the first in is the victor, all the rest being doomed to failure. But not so, he says, in the Christian course: all may run, all may obtain; the prize being not to him who is swiftest —not to him only—but to all who in running reach the goal.) And besides this, shown of those who are 'entered': some, yea, many there are, who run and then for a while cease to run; many, who did run well and then are hindered; many, who though slow are making fair progress; and many, who have turned backward, yet with a change of mind may still show good running, and overpass many competitors who have not declined at all, but are less fleet of foot. Here are not too classes, but a multitude—each one a unit: whether the face be set forward to the goal, or for the time has turned aside, or even is looking back, or again is on the runners in front, while as yet not one foot of the course is covered. Here the common classification is erring by defect: the runners—those 'entered' to run—cannot be reckoned in

two classes, nor in three or more. Every man is a *unit.* So it is in the Christian course.

This is exact: its takes in every one of the whole congregation, and shows the double truth, and shows it in each one. Thus: every one of the whole congregation is in CHRIST—by his Baptism he is: "As many of you as were baptised into CHRIST did put on CHRIST"; "Ye all are brethren"; "Ye are all one in CHRIST JESUS"—*one* class, not two. But for the rest—as respects the running, looking at your running in the Christian race, what shall be said? You are no more one, nor are you two, but *many.*

Classifications are convenient things, but they do not tell interior quality. They never do. In Botany, of the same class, some are food, and some are poisons. They are not available for every purpose of truth: they do not distinguish the evil from the good. In Canaan, were the People of the LORD—as such, all one class—and round about them those that were His "enemies": yet in heathen wilds lived some who were better than some who had dwelling in the garden of the LORD. In the Book of Psalms, the people—GOD'S People—are all Israel; all else were "heathen": yet out of that heathen horde came some nearer to GOD in heart than many who were in covenant relation. In the Apostolic Churches, all were "in CHRIST," "brought nigh"; all else

were "aliens and strangers": yet of the strangers, of those "without," some will GOD prefer before some that be "within," and "children." It is the same all through, in the New Testament and in the Old. "Many shall come from the East and from the West, and shall sit down in the Kingdom of GOD, but the Children of the Kingdom shall be cast out." Here, in GOD'S mind, awaiting some further showing, is classification, exact, formal, and definite; and it is nowhere else—nowhere else as yet.

You cannot divide those which be "in CHRIST"; you cannot divide those who in that they were baptised into CHRIST, "did put on CHRIST"; you cannot make two of those who are "GOD'S husbandry, GOD'S building." And the Apostle does not divide them, he does not make them two. He addresses the "spiritual," and he addresses the "carnal"; those as men and these as "babes in CHRIST." He addresses the strong, and he addresses the weak; but he does not make them two. "There are vessels unto honour" and "vessels unto dishonour," he says, yet in one "Great House," which house, says he, "is the Church of the Living GOD," he finds them. The "unruly," the "feeble-minded," the "strong," the "weak," the "perfect," and the "carnal," he addresses severally, and with exhortation suited unto each; but to all, and of all alike he says,

"Ye are all one in CHRIST JESUS"—all "one Body in CHRIST."

In the day which is ever drawing nigh, there will be *division;* and it will begin, where judgment begins, "at the House of GOD"; and it will be into Two Classes: exact, formal, and final. Wheat and tares, sheep and goats, the good fish and the bad. All, *then*, will have been brought unto its final issue. But now, and till that day, none are so divided: goats cannot become sheep, nor sheep goats; tares cannot become wheat, nor wheat tares. These indeed will have been formed in life; they are forming now: *character* is forming, but it is not formed. Now can nothing be determined; for nothing has reached its end. Now the evil are not all evil, the good are not all good: no great gulf, which one may not pass, divides them. Now, there is hope for all, and fear for all. Strong goat-like qualities appear in many of the flock, which is the one flock of the one Shepherd: now they lie down in one pasture and one fold contains them. But likeness and unlikeness, these grow daily; they are developing more and more: a character is being inwrought and stamped upon each one which will become permanent. What takes beginning here and is reversible, will find its ending there and be final. *Then* shall be the Great Separation: two classes, not one; two, not more—Sheep on the right hand, Goats on the left.

## XIV.

# A Plea for the Lost Sheep.

"The Lost Sheep of the House of Israel."—S. Matt x. 6.

'A COLUMN for Religious Profession' has been a point of much debate, both in and out of Parliament. Churchmen have not been found unwilling that it should have its place in the Census Paper: 'Better that,' they say, 'than the doubtful returns made and offered by unauthorised persons to serve some party purpose.' Those who are jealous of the Church strongly object, 'Because,' say they, 'many would enter themselves as belonging to the Church who at present make no profession, and in this way the number of Church people would be made to appear greater than the number actually is.' And some have ventured to hint in reply, that the very fact of these preferring no claim to be other than Church people may perhaps be taken as a not unfair reason for holding them to be such.

Unless for the day, it is not a Welsh question,

nor yet an English question; it is a *Church* question—one of eternal importance. The matter of Registration we may dismiss at once. But, for the rest, we must do more than delicately *hint*, or we show that we do not know the truth. And, if we do not know it, neither can we rise to it in practice, nor can we hope to bring others under the power of it. We may not hesitate. It is an incontestible fact that all these—answering now to no call—with exceptions quite inconsiderable, bear on them the Church's mark, which is the mark of CHRIST, though at present they show no visible sign of it: though they be found in the wilderness and out of the way they are the Church's sheep; they are of her fold, and of her pasture.

The Church has *always* had her lost sheep. If there be reproach in the fact, it is a reproach which she shares with her Master, for they are *His* lost sheep. It is not a reproach to her to acknowledge the lost sheep as hers. Perhaps on the contrary, it is, of its kind, even her very highest glory. For in this the Church is unique, different in this respect from all others called 'Churches.' They own not any lost sheep. They do not acknowledge any. The Church acknowledges all who may at any time have had CHRIST'S sign marked on their foreheads: she knows His claim to them, and she asserts it against all comers; even against their own will she asserts it

—for the sheep that is CHRIST'S cannot otherwise dispose of itself. They that are sometimes called 'Churches' have each their own private mark, periodically renewable and renewed; and except they find it, the sheep is cast forth as a sheep, and is none of theirs. If this is figurative language, it is language which is also literally exact, and exact in every particular.

And it is language which is required of us: Holy Scripture requires it, both of the Old Testament and of the New. Take the text, and consider it. Found in the New Testament, it is language which yet sets forth the truth as it was and is in the Old. "The lost sheep of the House of Israel." Many were found then, as many are found now, erring, straying, out of the way. All through the eventful history of GOD'S ancient People they were found: not a few, but a multitude. Under Prophets and under Shepherd-Kings they were found. Yet—and this is one of our lessons—these were "*of the House of Israel.*" All which belonged to Israel, all grace, all favour, all privilege, all whatever they would, belonged to them; and belonged to them of GOD'S gift. It was their birthright; it was theirs by covenant title. GOD was faithful, He cast not away His People; they did but depart themselves, and in returning—and return was always open to them day and night—they entered into full possession

of that which was ever their own. This is here acknowledged, it is acknowledged in the text.

And this not only: they were "*the Sheep*." This, again, is one of our lessons—they were sheep, and were not goats; they were the children that were within, and not the dogs that were "without." The children's bread belonged to them, and belonged to them as it did not belong to others. And though they were *erring* sheep, and children that were rebellious, they were sheep still and children still. The title never was withheld from them: they might depart from grace given, and so perish; but their claim was always an allowed claim, and their title was always good.

It is a very affecting story, but when the Divine Shepherd of Israel came, it was to these He came; to these "first." Not to the members in good standing, not to the righteous needing no repentance, but to those who had turned aside and were out of the way. He announced that His Mission was to these, to these first, "to *the lost sheep* of the House of Israel." If there was reproach—and there was—He entered into the reproach, and thus showed Himself to be "the Good Shepherd"; not disowning but acknowledging the sheep that were lost. Lost He found them: sinners, harlots, outcasts, spurned and despised, He found them to be. Yet He did not sever them from Israel, nor deny them to be the lost *sheep*, bearing a mark

and covenant sign and token which was Divine, and which He ever acknowledged.

Guided by His example, animated by His spirit, the Apostles show us the same lesson. In so far as the Apostolic Churches can show the lesson, they show it. Take only the Epistles to the Corinthians, and they show it. The "carnal and not spiritual," and those who "walked as men"; and those that "defrauded," and did "wrong" one to another; and those who fell into manifold disorders, "envy and strife" and every evil work, and brought their disorders into the very house of GOD, and are spoken of as "drunken"; and one who was "incestuous," and those who were "puffed up" thereat: all these, and others the like of these, S. Paul—he the LORD'S Apostle—spoke of as being of the Church, "in CHRIST," in Church-membership, "of the household and family of GOD"; not "without" but "within"; and spoke as was needed, and did as was needed—he "judged" them, and laid them under penance. All this, just because they were "brethren," erring brethren, and "within," calling for ecclesiastical censure; "but them that are without," he said, "GOD judgeth."

If you find the characters worse of those many who—whether in town or country village—it is supposed ought not to be counted as belonging to the Church, I do not know it. If you find

reproach to the Church in owning such as her members, it is a reproach which—following in the steps of his Master—S. Paul shares. The truth is that the Church *does* own them, though no man else owns them; and owns to responsibility for them, though none other than the Church be found willing to own it or to share it.

The truth again is, that following CHRIST, the Church has a *mission* to such; and following the Apostles, the Church has a present *office* towards such; and thus has, "for better for worse," a multitude of erring, straying, stained and entangled ones — herding together and apart — which, as such, no other than the Church dares to own or has the faith to own. All upon whom the Name of CHRIST has been named, all upon whom His mark and sign has been set, all are His Sheep; and these, though for a while lost and out of the way, are *sheep*—sheep they are, and not goats. Strong goat-like qualities may be found in them, and are developing day by day; they are His Sheep still. And being His Sheep, bearing His Name and Sign, they are *her* Sheep by the same right and warrant.

This her faith may save both her and them. Let it be seen, let it be seen and acknowledged, as the truth of GOD requires it to be, that not only has she a *mission* towards them—such as she has, and may take up or may hold for a while in reserve,

towards any heathen people—but towards them has further a present *office* as well, an office pastoral and perpetual, which she is bound to discharge, in which none shares or can share; and then, with the power of the Apostle and the teaching of the Apostle she may reclaim them for CHRIST, and one by one win them home to the one Fold of the one Shepherd; when cleansed, and healed, and nourished with food convenient for them, they may be unto His glory, and to her own great rejoicing in the Day of the LORD.

## XV.

# Sure Beginnings.

"And the Lord added to the Church daily such as were being saved."—Acts II. 47.

IF only we would receive these words in the truth of them—naught adding, naught taking away—how many angry controversies would they foreclose. For the controversies which surround Baptism do not spring out of the text of Holy Scripture (scarcely one of them does) but they arise from independent considerations, which are brought to Holy Scripture to gain for them support. Especially do they arise from our own exaggerated notions of what a State of Grace must be, compared with that which appears in the men and children who have been baptised, seeing in them what too often we see.

We think of very great and perfect things when we speak of the being "in Christ," or being in Grace; and we make admission to the state of grace imply the presence of them all. And we do not perceive how great our mistake is; great and

serious too. It is the same kind of mistake, as it would be to think how great the things are which go to make up what is called a Scholar, forgetting the while that the little one last admitted into school is a scholar too, though A B C is all he has begun to learn. Especially with the word '*Salvation*' or that of '*Saved*,' do we conclude the presence and actual possession of every virtue and grace. The mistake is a great one; it could not well be greater. But it is serious, too: for it has given rise and still gives countenance to that very familiar and very fanatical persuasion on the part of a man who professes to have just 'got salvation,' that now he is prepared to die and at once fit to go to Heaven.

It is errors of this sort which sap the spiritual life at its foundation, and cut it short at its very birth; as well as rendering it impossible that that which means so much should ever be rightly attributed to Baptism. But nothing which means so much is ever attributed to Baptism, except by inexcusable mistake: inexcusable because there is no ground for it in Holy Scripture, none in the teaching of the Church.

Especially valuable, then, viewed in this light, is this first and typical instance of what is rightly and duly attached to Holy Baptism, "The LORD added to the Church daily such as were being saved"—such as were *in process of being saved.*

In obeying the word, "Repent and be baptised," the three thousand entered on the State of Grace; their salvation, so entered upon, was not wrought out; it was only begun. And only begun it is in every one who is baptised, or who otherwise enters (or deems he enters) upon the State of Salvation.

There are just two familiar figures which are made use of in Holy Scripture, to show Grace and Standing: "My sheep," the sheep of My flock; and "branches in Me," branches in the True Vine. Now, the "branch" begins as a bud; never is it a branch otherwise. The "sheep" begins as a lamb, at a stage so far removed from all that is to be, that we can only say of it, it is born. So it is in CHRIST, even as these figures show. For His Members, the beginning, as respects Salvation, is "the day of small things." All that is given and assured is the "state" of "being saved." "I heartily thank our Heavenly Father that He hath called me to this *state* of salvation" is the language of the Catechism in respect of it. "*Members* of CHRIST" they are, else could they not be in CHRIST at all. It is salvation in its first act, which is the act of One; to be duly followed by other acts, in which human will and endeavour have place and part. It is a beginning given; and sure, so far. "The LORD" adds them to the Church—"By one SPIRIT are

we all baptised into one Body." In adult life, the individual has indeed part in what leads *up* to it—he has repentance and faith; he has no part *in* it—it is "of water and the SPIRIT," "the laver" and "the HOLY GHOST."

Let there be no controversy arising at this point. I have used this language of Holy Scripture not for the purpose of magnifying Baptism, but rather for the purpose of showing what is the low estate of those that are taken to be "in CHRIST." It is quite certain that S. Paul addresses all those to whom he writes, as being "in CHRIST"; and quite certain also that he refers all back to their baptism, which he says is "baptism into CHRIST." Equally certain it is again, that he makes this grace—declared by him of many, whom yet he says are "babes in CHRIST" and "carnal"—to be merely the beginning, only the beginning of that *to which they are called* in CHRIST. It is this last certainty, and neither of the other two, which is requiring now to be shown.

However truly entered into, salvation has still to be worked out: so says S. Paul. However true the faith that is found, to it every grace has to be added: so says S. Peter. And the graces, not by any necessity or requirement yet found, are these: virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly-kindness, charity. How great they are, and how truly essential they are, you

may see by giving consideration to them. And let it be observed especially that "godliness" is one of the number, one that is to be added. Godliness is not given to us when we are baptised, or when we enter upon the state of salvation; it is to be *added:* and to be added, says S. Peter, by "giving diligence" to add it, that is, diligence to acquire it; or, in the language of S. Paul, by working it out. It is by growth, and by gain; and not by original gift: hence, S. Paul bids us to grow in grace, to make increase. So again—and in striking language when viewed together in comparison—S. Paul tells all, that being baptised into CHRIST they "have put on CHRIST"; and yet he tells the same persons that they have still to "put off the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts," and to "put on the new man which after GOD is created in righteousness and true holiness." This, by careless thinkers, might be taken to be a contradiction. It is none of that: the thing spoken of is not a perfect grace, it is a grace which is to be perfected. So, too, speaks he to the Colossians, "But now put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, *seeing that* ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man." So, again, he tells us; and notably he tells the Corinthians and the Galatians, that they are "in

CHRIST," and still that CHRIST is not yet "formed" in them. This also might be taken to be a contradiction, or as in need of some showing how it can be. The showing is given, the Vine shows it: the branch is in the vine from a bud, when it is a bud and nothing more; the vine exhibiting itself in its own proper fruitfulness in each several branch, is by continued nurture and by a long process of growth and development. And yet again: the Apostle tells us that we are "in CHRIST" as "babes," as babes only, and that we have to go on to the full stature of the man in CHRIST. This is so familiarly seen in the domestic circle, that this time, a contradiction will neither be found nor imagined: yet is it the same truth as before—so often repeated, and that in divers ways.

And this is not an abstract truth only. It is *exhibited*, when we read the Epistles to the Churches, by those who were the members. *They*, also, show the truth; they are living examples of it. Thus, the Corinthians, or many of them, to whom S. Paul writes, were "babes in CHRIST": not spiritual, but "yet carnal"; not yet having added "godliness," but showing much ungodliness; not yet having "put off the old man with his deeds," but found in them, and by the Apostle reproved for them; not yet having "put on the new man which after GOD is created in righteousness and true holiness," but having need to put it

on, and to be bidden. Thus, too, the Galatians, to whom the Apostle writes: they were his "little children," "in CHRIST," but CHRIST not yet in them; whom he had "begotten" in CHRIST, yet for whom he "travailed in birth again" "until CHRIST be formed in them." "Babes" yet, they had not put on the likeness of CHRIST; "little children" yet, they had not come to the full stature: and he was afraid for them, and stood in doubt of them, and exhorted them with much entreaty, and as a father was affectionately desirous of them.

And so it was found in all the Churches—in all the Churches of the Saints: in some more, in some less.

S. Paul knew nothing of that doctrine which would persuade us that men come forth from the birth full-grown, that men bound forth into the Christian life replete with every grace—the old man all put off, the new man all put on; quite ready to die, at once fit for Heaven.

This fanatical persuasion does two things for us: (1) Seeing that Salvation, in any such sense of the word, is not assured to us by Baptism, nor can be (that would indeed be 'Unscriptural,' and 'contrary to what by experience is found'), men are reduced to *waiting*—waiting till salvation is brought to them. Wait indeed they must; they cannot "work out" what is not in them. Re-

ceiving not the Apostle's witness, "testifying that this is the true grace of GOD in which ye stand"; "ignorant" of, what he "would not that they should be ignorant," namely, that "all baptised" are "all partakers"—under the Law of Grace as under the Law of Works—they cannot receive his injunction to work out their salvation, thereto giving diligence. They cannot, so they wait. This it does: it sets men waiting for another 'salvation' in neglect of the Salvation, "the common salvation," upon which they have entered. More than this it does, and worse: (2) Received, (or so accounting of it for themselves) in a measure so full, it cuts short the work of grace in its beginning; it arrests all orderly progressive growth. Rejoicing in salvation, as of a treasure found, men acknowledge not the need, the absolute need, of working it out; glorying in their faith, their "precious faith," they realise not that every virtue, every grace, has to be added; counting themselves wise and full, they grow not "in the knowledge and the love of GOD." As babes stunted and deformed, they come not unto "the full stature."

Turning now to you, I say two things: (1) You are "*in* CHRIST"; "Ye are all—ye all are—the children of GOD by faith in CHRIST JESUS, for as many of you as were baptised into CHRIST did put on CHRIST." (2) You are "*babes* in CHRIST"

(of many this is true); you are not "spiritual," you are "yet carnal." You are "little children" in CHRIST—so incomplete, so unenriched, "until CHRIST be formed in you." Thus "testifying" with the Apostle, with him thus "exhorting" also —Wherefore, brethren, "give diligence," "give all diligence" to "work out your salvation"; give heed, give earnest heed, "to make your calling and election sure."

## XVI.

# All the Congregation Holy.

"Preserve Thou my soul, for I am holy."—Psalm lxxxvi. 2.

WHO of us would dare, being such as we are, to go down on our knees before God and say, "Preserve Thou my soul, for I am *holy*"? We ought all to dare: even being such as we are, we ought all to dare. And if, saying it, we did not feel it was the fittest language that could ever come out of our mouth, we should show that we know not the truth. We should show, that we do not know and realise how near we have been brought to God in Christ.

God has set His Name upon us, and made us one with Him in Christ. "As Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us"—this is for us our Divine Lord's prayer of consecration; and it is infinitely, unutterably true, even before we have done any one thing to make it seem true. David was not vaunting himself. He was only speaking the language of the Old Testament Dispensation,

taught him of GOD; and applied to all persons, and even to all things which were GOD'S. And true as it was then, in that Dispensation, unspeakably truer it is now of all persons "brought" and given to CHRIST, upon whom He has set His Name, and who after Him are called Christians. They are holy: all the Congregation is holy.

This holiness, by which all the baptised become "Saints," is not to be identified with our own answering holiness: "*Be ye* holy, for I am holy," is the language of the Old Testament; "As He which hath called you is holy, so *be ye* holy in all manner of conversation," that is the language of the New. And, "holiness without which no man shall see the LORD," that is true for all alike; for the Jew, and also for the Christian. Such *inward* holiness, holiness of heart and mind and spirit, is holiness which is looked for of us; the holiness which will be *found* in us, if ever we enter Heaven: for therein shall enter no unclean thing, nothing that defileth or is defiled. But of that the text does not speak. Neither of that do I speak. The matter in hand is great enough as it is—too great for men commonly to find that they have at all duly entered into its truth.

Brethren, let me plead: I want you to realise, to endeavour your best to realise that *you are holy:* that GOD'S Name is upon you, and because of *that* you are holy; that CHRIST'S sign and seal are

upon you, and because of *that* you are holy; that you have been "baptised into CHRIST," and thus "have put on CHRIST," and because of *that* you are holy; that, in a word, you are CHRIST'S—His very Members, and because of *that* you are holy. Great things hang upon this truth, and very largely turn upon your realising it. Forgetting it, or taught even to disbelieve and deny it, you are in danger of falling into awful sin and wickedness: for, if you defile your bodies you defile CHRIST—you defile *Him in His Members;* not keeping your bodies "in temperance, soberness and chastity," your sin is not against them, your mortal bodies, only, your sin is against the HOLY GHOST—in so dishonouring your body you dishonour the HOLY GHOST, for your body is His Temple. And thus, you fall under a much sorer condemnation: "If any man defile the Temple of GOD, him shall GOD destroy; for the temple of GOD is holy, which temple ye are."

"For the temple of GOD is *holy*": this is the holiness that is being spoken of: and when it can be so written, it is not a little thing. Men count it little; other and false teachers count it little: but not so does S. Paul, for S. Paul's teaching was not as theirs. "Which temple *ye are*": now, let not the truth be missed. Of whom speaketh the Apostle this—"For the temple of GOD is holy, which temple ye are"? Even of those, of all

those who had been baptised, of those that had been baptised into CHRIST, and yet were falling into sin and walking as men; who in life and conversation were "carnal" and "not spiritual"; who were, some of them, falling into this very sin of impurity, and so were dishonouring their members, which were the members of CHRIST, and defiling their bodies which were the temples of the HOLY GHOST—*they* were "holy." Inward holiness, holiness of person, it was not: just the contrary; it was holiness which proceedeth of GOD, and which He had put upon them. It is not then a little thing; it never can be that. Holy they were, for GOD counted them holy; holy they were, for they were consecrated to GOD, set apart for Him and by Him; they were for His service, and not for their own; they were His, and were not their own. So they were, and so to the end must they be. This is the teaching of S. Paul in all these passages.

And, because they had *this* holiness, and had it first, they must answer to it: "*Be ye* holy, for I am holy." As face to face, they must answer to it. This is the very ground for requiring it of them. "As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." As being His and called in Him, they must have, and take care to have, this other holiness—this answering holiness: that is the ceaseless insistence of

S. Paul. Just because they were members of CHRIST—and as such were holy, just because they were temples of the HOLY GHOST—and as such were holy, he could *bid* them be holy; and bring arguments of surpassing force, considerations of almost irresistible attraction, to bear upon them; as he always did. Not, unless you are holy you will lose your soul and go to hell: but, your hallowed bodies, these your hallowed members, which are the members of CHRIST, unless you keep them holy and clean, you dishonour and in a manner defile Him Whose you are; you "put Him to an open shame"!—a much more powerful argument. A much more powerful and a much more worthy argument: appealing, not to what is lowest in man, the sense of self-preservation, which is found fullest developed in the brutes and in men of a brutish nature; but to what is highest in man, to what is akin to angels unfallen, nay, akin to GOD Himself. And—a consideration worthy of the highest regard—unless you accept S. Paul's doctrine of men baptised into CHRIST, and made His, and holy because they are His, you *cannot* do this. You must then step down into the lower ground, and take up arguments which have less force, and still less as time goes on; and the least force of all for those, just those, who have most need to be raised.

When men, even men in sin—being so rightly

taught—are ready to admit, and even to avow it with their own mouths, that "All the Congregation is holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them," you are provided with just what you need: with a fulcrum, such as the truth is, and with a lever, such as their own avowal of it is, *for their uplifting*. How S. Paul, as a wise master-builder, used the truth, and used it to this end, we have seen. Because the Corinthians were carnal and walked as men, he did not say they were not in CHRIST — he said they were; because they defiled their members, he did not say that these their members were not the members of CHRIST —he said they were; because they dishonoured their bodies, he did not say that these their bodies were not the temples of the HOLY GHOST—he said they were, and that they were holy.

We have the contrary teaching in this our own day; we have had it now for a long time. Men who are the teachers, wise in their own wisdom, have left off the teaching of S. Paul. In that they have done so, they cannot deal with *the sinners* of the congregation as the Apostle dealt with them: they have abandoned both fulcrum and lever, and the sinning and erring brethren are left a dead weight upon the congregation—unmoved and unmovable.

## XVII.

# All Saved.

"Of the common Salvation."—S. Jude 3.

IN railway carriages and in sea-side resorts, and in all sorts and manners of places, (by the tract which is thrust into your hand, or at the mouth of a stranger) you are met with the question, '*Are you saved?*' And, if he chooses to exercise it, every baptised person has a right given him—a right which S. Paul recognises—to say, 'Yes, I am saved; saved, and entered upon the State of Salvation, in my Baptism.' This is much, and yet is only one half of the matter. Never in the New Testament, since the Apostles began their course of discipling and baptising, is Salvation referred to any other beginning. Never is any other beginning, after Baptism received, exhibited by example. And still there is more to follow: All are saved; not here a few, and there a few, but *all*—saved that they may be saved; being baptised, they are of the number of "those that are (in process of) being saved."

The matter may not be left here, thus tersely put and concluded: for your sakes it must be gone into at more length.

And first, of that question, 'Are you Saved?' which many are occupying themselves with, and with so little knowledge of Gospel truth. S. Paul never put the question to any one of all those unto whom he wrote Letters; nor did any other of the Apostles, in all that which they wrote to the Churches: neither he nor any other Apostle ever put the question to any one who was baptised. They did a very different thing; S. Paul especially did, and set us the example of doing—a very different thing. He told all such that they *were* saved: not saved at length and saved finally (it is never that while we live); not saved by their having attained unto a salvation which is worked out and completed (never is it that, either); but saved on GOD'S part; by His having placed them in a "state of salvation," by His having added them unto the number of "those that are being saved," by His having put them into CHRIST, and started them on their way with Grace and Calling. The Apostle assures *all* of this beginning, and bids them work out their salvation therefrom: "Wherefore," beloved, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is GOD which worketh in you both to will and to do"—thus S. Paul. And thus S. Peter,

"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure." "Giving all diligence," he says, "add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, to knowledge temperance, to temperance godliness," these and the rest; "for if ye do these things ye shall never fall." This they do to all; in every Epistle.

Now, (and this is the thing to mark) not one of these words, nor the like of any one, might be addressed to any one who was not already in the state of salvation. Not one might be said to an unbelieving Jew; not one might be said to a heathen man. Never were they, or either of them, so bidden. They might only be said to the Christian man, the baptised man. He was so bidden; none other than he was so bidden, or *could* be so bidden. To bid men who were not in CHRIST to work out their own salvation, would have been an impossible thing to S. Paul; he would have said 'Anathema' to it. His teaching is not, 'Work up unto Salvation,' addressed to men unsaved. It is something profoundly different: it is, 'That salvation which you have received, work out.' It implied, in the case of every one who was so addressed, that he was a saved man already, one of those who had entered upon salvation: it could imply no less. These might be neglectful (many were), they might be careless, they might be giving no heed—all the more did

he admonish them, to give diligence to make their calling and election sure; to work out their salvation with fear and trembling: "for, how shall we escape," it is demanded of them, "if we neglect so great salvation?" It was just a case for such admonishing. A man who had not entered upon "the common Salvation," who had not received Grace and Calling, could not receive these admonitions, or any the like of them; and certainly S. Paul would have been the last to give them to any such. S. Paul took all those to whom he wrote Epistles to be "in CHRIST," and addressed them as such; and if they had *not* been such, they could not have received his words, and his admonitions as little as the rest of what he wrote. They would have been "without." But they were *not* without; they were "within" and "in CHRIST," and so he said in every Epistle. Not the "spiritual" only, but the "carnal" also, for he said of these that they were "babes in CHRIST"; and this, notwithstanding that they "walked as men," after the flesh not after the Spirit, and for this were admonished of him. So he said, and so he taught. And not S. Paul only; as witness S. Jude, admonishing in like manner: "I will therefore put you in remembrance, though once ye knew this, how that the LORD, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not."

Now when men address such (baptised persons) with the question, 'Are you Saved?' they would place them in forgetfulness of that which the Apostle ever taught them; and in particular just *that* which he was careful to put them "in remembrance" of: so doing, they ignore the very thing which the Apostle of CHRIST himself kept ever in mind and persistently was keeping them in mind of—that they were CHRIST'S, that they were members of CHRIST, that their bodies were temples of the HOLY GHOST. "Know ye not?" "What! do ye not know?" "I would not that ye should be ignorant"—ignorant of what? even of this, that *all have standing in grace while not all receive the prize:* so "exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of GOD wherein ye stand." This always was *his* way of meeting them, if there was defilement, if there was sin into which they were falling. See it in one instance, that of those in the Church of Corinth who were found living as if they had "forgotten that they were purged from their old sins"; to whom, he says, he "could not speak as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal": he reminds them of what they once were, and of what has been done for them in CHRIST, and bids them "be not deceived . . . such were some of you: but ye were *washed*, but ye were *sanctified*, but ye were *justified* in the Name of the LORD JESUS." The

Apostle does not deny for them anything, and least of all does he deny for them a Christian standing; but, because they are "yet carnal" the more careful is he to hold them in mind of what they are and what they have in CHRIST.

They (the preachers of another doctrine) would place men on *a new foundation*, that of a salvation to be yet found and entered into—something after Baptism, and apart from Baptism, not one example of which do we find in the New Testament. There is no instance of anything such—call it by what name you will; there is no teaching of anything such. On the contrary, S. Paul always referred men back to something which was true of them already, something already entered into: "in CHRIST," "baptised into CHRIST," having "put on CHRIST," "dead with Him," the "old man crucified with Him," "buried with Him by Baptism into death," and hence to "reckon themselves to be dead indeed unto sin"; and henceforth to "work out their salvation with fear and trembling," and to "give diligence," "all diligence, to make their calling and election sure." The other teaching, now so commonly received, *diverts* men from this their proper work —that which S. Paul demands of them—to try for some new beginning, and to occupy themselves with 'seeking' salvation: it is, 'Drop the diligence, give over your works; seek Salvation, Salvation

by believing.' And there is to be said of it this: there is not so much as one example of it to be found in the whole New Testament, nor so much as one place where this course is urged upon men baptised.

The Apostle, entering the congregation, would set men *on their way;* with exhortation, with pleading, and with admonition—with spur and bridle would set men on their way, even *all this whole congregation.* It would be one *whole move forward,* as soon as men realised what it is that is required—Only diligence to give, only going on from grace to grace and from growth to growth, and the end assured: "for, if ye do these things ye shall never fall." The other teachers, of "another gospel which is not another," would set men looking for a salvation to be yet brought unto them; waiting for it, in prayers and tears waiting for it—until the LORD has mercy on them! Of this we read *nothing;* of the other *all* is written.

## XVIII.

# All to work out their Salvation.

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do, of His good pleasure."—Phil. ii. 12.

THERE are phrases in common use in what are called 'religious circles,' which ought to be treated as base coin is treated when it is nailed to the counter. Not to nail a bad shilling, or otherwise effectually to stop its further progress in deceiving the simple, is a delinquency and an offence against the common-weal counted by men unpardonable. A duty none the less—none the less, but the more—it is to bar the circulation of whatever comes under the King's name, but never came out of the King's mint, in respect of higher things.

My text leads me to mention two—two phrases in particular—which are current, and much in men's mouths; either as leading questions addressed to other men, or as personal statements

which a man is sometimes heard making of himself. Here is one, 'Have you got salvation?' Here is another, 'Are you seeking salvation?' In the other form, that of statements made relative to one's self, and uniting the two, they stand together thus: 'I have found salvation; I have got it.'

We might bear with these phrases being vulgar, and with their often falling with offence on men's ears, if only they were Scriptural—which they are not. And so vulgar have they become, that with just that spice of irreverence which is so dear to the carnal mind, they have passed into secular politics; and it is asked of this man or that, in the Lobby of the House of Commons, 'Have you got salvation?' But let that pass.

Now what I want to point out first—and it is a very important thing to point out and to draw attention to—is this: that, in the New Testament, these expressions are never heard in the Church. In the Epistles of the New Testament, twenty-one in number, addressed to the Churches—Jewish, Gentile, or mixed, these phrases, now so much in vogue, are never found; no, not once. S. Paul wrote thirteen of these Epistles and addressed them to Churches exhibiting every level of the Christian life, every variety of individual character: taking count of their condition, he wrote them to meet their spiritual needs, conjointly and severally

as individuals, and he never asked the question, 'Have you got salvation?' or the other question, 'Are you seeking salvation?' He never asked either question once, or caused it to be asked. He never addressed men as *seekers* of salvation. He never *bid* men seek salvation. Sinners he found in the Churches, he did: in the Church of Corinth he did; in the Church of Galatia he did, in the Church of Crete he did—"liars, evil beasts, slow bellies." What, then? He did not bid them 'get saved'; he did not earnestly counsel them to 'seek salvation'—never once. You might have expected it; there, if anywhere: you never find it; no, not once; not in any case: neither in these words, nor in any such.

Now it is immensely important (and never was it so important as it is now), that we should continue stedfastly in the doctrine of the Apostles, and that we should as stedfastly follow them in their methods; turning therefrom neither to the right nor to the left. When men are bold to depart therefrom, we must be bold to continue therein. In these days especially, when men are bold to differ, and even to avow their differing, let us be bold to come close, and to work close. Whether we see the necessity of it or not, we should. Amidst the conflict of sects and of individual teachers (and what individual teacher is there, who, if only he has a glib tongue, cannot

in these days get a following?) our only safety lies in stedfast adherence; our only hope of permanently furthering the cause of CHRIST, is in giving heed to the word, "Be ye followers of me, as I also am of CHRIST": in life; and not in life only, but in doctrine; and not in doctrine only, but in all else; otherwise, when we are least aware of it, we open a door to the widest departure, and if in one thing, in all.

Now let a reason be given; and if people would not only read, but think—think as well as read—they would see the reason. It is the second great matter I want to point out, as deserving of the most earnest attention. Two assumptions *underlie* these questions, and underlie them always: the first is, that the men of whom these questions are asked may not be counted as being, nor as having been, in a state of salvation; and the second is, that if thus seeking, they now *get* salvation (or deem they do), the great work is *done*—they have thenceforth but to hold it fast. And what I want to point out is, that S. Paul's doctrine is just the opposite, the opposite in both respects. Manifestly, that is the reason why we never hear from him in the congregation, "whether by word or by epistle," such language as, 'Have you got saved?' 'Are you seeking salvation?'—neither this, nor any like language. He never bids men to seek to be saved: his bidding is never anything of this

sort. He always bids men to "work out" their salvation: his bidding is always of this kind. Read his Epistles through, pencil and paper in hand, and you will see it. He always tells men that they are "in CHRIST"; that "so many as were baptised into CHRIST" have entered upon Salvation, and have need now to *work it out*—and have only that need.

It is just these two truths that we have been forgetting. We need to have our ears besieged by them, and all which through our ears can be reached: by all means and manners, and with all the force the preacher can command, we need to have them brought home to us—home to our understandings and our hearts. We—we all—are of that number, who, S. Paul says are "in CHRIST." (If the "carnal" Corinthians were, we are.) Our sins do not forbid it: our sins do but bring us under the same rebukes, the same warnings, as fell upon them. Our sins, if persisted in, do but bring us under the sorer condemnation. Our bodies are "members of CHRIST"—dishonour them as we may; and "temples of the HOLY GHOST"—defile them as we may. (But, let a man take heed how he defile the temple of GOD, for "him shall GOD destroy.") We are of that number, of whom S. Paul speaks when he says, "As many of you as were baptised into CHRIST did put on CHRIST"—not one more, nor one less.

Salvation has been brought to us, and we have entered upon it; we have but to work it out. We are of the number of them that are "being saved," unless we go back to perdition; we have but to go on right forward. We are of the number of those, who, S. Paul says, are "no more strangers and aliens," but are "of the household of GOD." If those to whom S. Paul wrote in these terms were, then we are; though, like them, we have need of much admonition, such as the Apostle gives and does not spare. We are not "without," we are "within"—so he tells us, so he insists; and all that he says to them "that are within," in many words, he says to us. S. Paul *could not* have asked any such question in the congregation, as "Have you got salvation?' So, he would have stultified himself completely: they had salvation, and he held them responsible for it, and responsible for working it out.

I verily believe this: that if a man would read these Epistles of S. Paul, and let their teachings have full force and come home to his own self, he would learn therefrom more of sound doctrine than ever he had learnt from sermons and tracts of the usual sort in all the days of his life; a new and fruitful beginning might well be dated from that hour. We want certain assurance of our standing, S. Paul would give it us; we want comfort—in the true sense of the word, S. Paul

would give it us; we want instruction, guidance, warning, S. Paul would give us all three: the whole would be a quickening word.

What is *the case* with those of us who have been giving heed to another doctrine—doctrine which is not according to S. Paul? Nine out of ten of us, We are waiting for something to *happen* to us, expecting something to *come upon* us! It is the wrongest thing we can do, the wrongest and the falsest. It makes us sit still, when we should be giving all diligence; it makes null and void—as respects our own selves—all S. Paul's most earnest exhortations; it makes all his admonishings pass over as wind, when they should fall on us as very swords.

Now let us come closer to our text: "Work out your own salvation." This, like so much more—nay, like *every* word which S. Paul addresses to the Churches—can only be said to those who are "in CHRIST." To any other—Work out your own salvation—it would be a false word: it would be legal; it would be just that which S. Paul falls upon almost with curses. First a man must be in CHRIST; he must have received "the gift": then, and then only, may he be bidden to "work it out." And just this is what he *needs* to be bidden to do; for on the working of it out, its whole value depends—its whole value to him. It is otherwise of no value at all. "Work out your

own salvation," work it out; that is S. Paul's word.

And, it does not mean, Begin to do works; bring good works into your life. It means something much more exact, much more proper to it. It means this, That salvation which you have received work out: let it grow, and blossom, and bear fruit in you: give it nurture and care; give it culture; give it weeding, let it not be choked and strangled by evil growths; give it tilth, bring to it the succours provided; give it your diligence, all diligence. Let it have free course; let it grow and expand and fill—as from seam to seam—the whole being, body soul and spirit; that so you may glorify GOD in these which are GOD'S, that GOD may be glorified in you. Men and brethren! S. Paul does not bid you *seek* Salvation: that grace which bringeth Salvation, he says, you have *received*. He does not say that receiving it, the work is *done*. He says the very contrary, the very opposite in both respects: and the very opposite is the truth. You have received it—you have; work it out. "Work out you own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is GOD which worketh in you both to will and to do."

## XIX.

# "Power from on high," unto all given.

"Thou art gone up on high, Thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men."—Ps. lxviii. 18.

WHITSUN Day! What interest have we in this Day? The greatest possible. A present interest, an enduring interest, and an interest not less than any that is counted under the Christian name.

For none of the works of God, as touching Christ Himself—not even the Incarnation, nor the Resurrection, nor any other that is named, is greater than this which we commemorate to-day. In importance it is second to none: only in point of time is it second; and even in point of time, second only in its relation to us, as a last and completing gift. For before ever God the Son had done the least part towards our salvation except to will it, as God the Father willed it, the Holy Ghost moving by the same will was *at work* upon it. The Divine Humanity of Christ,

that whereby, as by an instrument, our Redemption was wrought out, was itself the work of the HOLY GHOST. He, our SAVIOUR, was indeed born of the Virgin Mary, of her flesh and of her substance; but it was the HOLY GHOST Who took of her the common elements of our nature, and of them *made* the CHRIST that was to be: "He was conceived by the HOLY GHOST." And being born—such was the order of the Divine working—He remained as a tender plant without fruit, until at His Baptism, the HOLY GHOST came upon Him, and—"abode upon Him." It was then (in the order of grace) He received *power*.

You never read of any work done by Him before. You never read of any word of teaching set forth by Him before. Nay, until the HOLY GHOST came upon Him and there abode, "remaining on Him," He was not *the CHRIST*: though He was of the age of thirty years and His life on earth drawing to its close, He remained yet (as has been said) only as a tender plant and one without fruit: but the HOLY GHOST coming upon Him and with this *anointing*, He was from that day forth the CHRIST of GOD, and had power towards men. Then His works began. Then His teachings began. And all His works done, were "by the HOLY GHOST"; all His words spoken, were by the HOLY GHOST—"The SPIRIT of the LORD is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me

to preach the Gospel to the poor." Even the Sacrifice He made for our sins, was by the HOLY GHOST: "He through the Eternal SPIRIT offered Himself without spot to GOD," as a Lamb without blemish.

Thus it stood at the morning of the Resurrection. Thus it stood at the end of the Great Forty Days. He called Apostles; He gave them their commission; "He through the HOLY GHOST" gave "commandments unto the Apostles whom He had chosen"; He spoke to them "of the things pertaining to the Kingdom"—in which under Him they should hold office and "sit on thrones"; He prepared all things; He gave them the final order, "Go ye—go ye and disciple all nations." And even then, He, as it were, recalled the word, superseding it for the present by another, "Wait —wait for the Promise of the FATHER, which ye have heard of Me." All power was given unto Him, "all power in Heaven and in earth"; but not yet was the same in measure imparted unto *them:* Wait till ye receive power; "tarry until ye be endued with power from on high." Ascending to the throne of His glory, it was the first thing thought of, the first thing taken care for by the Ascended SAVIOUR—"Gifts for men"; and they, all included in this one Gift, "the Gift of the HOLY GHOST."

Thus far it is very important that your faith

should have full grasp of the truth. Yet is there more to follow, much more, and of the like kind.

Realise this, let your faith apprehend it: JESUS, the CHRIST, was the first Man Who received the HOLY GHOST—and He, indeed, without measure—the first of our race, after Adam and Adam's loss; by Whom all, and more than all, was regained and by Him won for men. His words imply this; His promises imply it: "I will send unto you from the FATHER another Comforter, which is the HOLY GHOST, that He may abide with you for ever"; He shall "come upon you," Him "ye shall receive." Plainly, it was a gift over and above what all along they had. The Evangelists assert it, assert it expressly: they say, "for the HOLY GHOST was not yet given"; and, they assign the reason, "because that JESUS was not yet glorified." It was a new and gracious gift in prospect, not yet won for men. CHRIST'S coming took nothing away from men: all that the saints of GOD had before His coming, the disciples had during His earthly sojourn: all, and yet not *this*, "the HOLY GHOST was not yet given"—which is to say, not to them, nor to any that were before them.

How shall we think of this? We shall be thinking truly if we think of it thus: As the Cloud of GOD'S Presence attended the Children of Israel, GOD'S People of old, going before them, following

after them, yet not until the Tabernacle was built, *entering in* and dwelling there—so it is in CHRIST. They, GOD'S People of old, were not without GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT: all their deeds, whether of faith or of heroism, were done by Him; all wisdom came of Him, all power and might, even all good things. It was as true then as it is true now—

> "And every virtue we possess,
> And every conquest won,
> And every thought of holiness
> Are His alone";

and the fathers and children of Israel might have sung it.

But there is a difference, a mighty difference, in which our faith must stand: He was there, as GOD the SON was there—there with His own creation. But until, in CHRIST, a Tabernacle was prepared Him, He *entered not in*. Before, He was a Visitor, a transient Guest; now He became an abiding Guest, and an Inmate.

For here, in CHRIST, was a new beginning—the beginning of the New Creation of GOD; and of necessity and very fitness, a new order began: to CHRIST and to His Members, even to "the least in the Kingdom of Heaven," the HOLY GHOST was given.

That Gift was given once for all, for "all the

days." And this day stands at the head of them; of the whole number count only is made from this day. This day, in answer to CHRIST and in reward of His merit, the HOLY GHOST was a Gift "received for men," and of His sending; being sent, He came to remain with "those that are CHRIST'S" for ever, and to take up for Himself an abiding. For now, in CHRIST and in His Members, He had a *Tabernacle*. He makes the Member, as He made the Head, and He *enters in*. With every Baptism the HOLY GHOST has as much to do and as necessary a part as He had with the Conception. He moves in "the laver," which is the womb of the Church, as He moved in the womb of her who bare the CHRIST. In the Dispensation of Grace there is no such thing as 'Water Baptism'; no such thing as Baptism without the HOLY GHOST. Baptism which is without the HOLY GHOST is "a fond thing vainly invented," without either validity or effect. "There is one Baptism," and Baptism which is "of water and the SPIRIT" is that Baptism. It is His own ordinance, from which if He be put forth, it is no more Baptism—no more than is "the washing of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels." And following upon Baptism and connected therewith, is the Laying-on-of-hands; which, in the practice of the Apostles served a use neither exceptional nor temporary: for, "by the Laying-on-

of-hands the HOLY GHOST was given"; that is to say, He Who built the house now came and filled it. He *entered in*. It was His own ordinance which thus served His own end: in using it He gave it sanction, and more than sanction—He gave it formal adoption.

And now, your faith must stand in the truth.

Not only was He, the HOLY GHOST, given to "the Body of CHRIST which is the Church" once for all, never to be given again in like manner, because never to be withdrawn; but also He is given to the Members of the Body, to them every one, never to be given again in like manner, because never to be withdrawn. "If any man have not the SPIRIT of CHRIST, he is none of His." The truth of this declaration is one that is obscured, and for many never comes home. The meaning is not that which is commonly taken to be its meaning, this, namely, 'If any man have not the *mind* of CHRIST he is none of His.' Those who are found to be "yet carnal," being baptised, "are CHRIST'S," S. Paul being witness. These are they to be bidden, "Let this mind be in you which was also in CHRIST JESUS." The true meaning is that which appears when the words are in reversed order, 'If any man be CHRIST'S he has the SPIRIT of CHRIST'—he has received from CHRIST that Gift, that thereby his sanctification may be worked out. This, the end of our Calling in CHRIST, is

the end of the SPIRIT of CHRIST being given. Get rid of, once for all, the wretched notion that the HOLY GHOST is only with the holy. He does not come to us because we are holy; He comes to us as being the Members of CHRIST, and in order to make us holy. Any other contention rests in entire forgetfulness of what is His office: which is, to cleanse that which is unclean. Any other contention is, moreover, in distinct opposition to the teaching of the Apostles in what they have written to the Churches: the Corinthians defiled their bodies; they none the less were the "Members of CHRIST," and their bodies none the less were "Temples of the HOLY GHOST." In this stood the very climax, the awful character of their sin. Thus was established at once their blessedness and their peril—their awful peril: he who defiled, defiled that which was "of CHRIST" and "in CHRIST" as His member; he who defiled, defiled "the Temple of the HOLY GHOST." Such an one "despises not man but GOD, Who hath given unto us His HOLY SPIRIT"—that is, the SPIRIT, GOD the HOLY GHOST, Who is *in* him by gracious gift is despised by him. Thus, every sin in a Christian man, a baptised man, is a sin against the HOLY GHOST. It must be so: it could not be otherwise.

This is the truth which S. Paul drives home so persistently in the case of those who "walk as

men" after the flesh, and are "yet carnal": namely, that they have received and are the present holders of this Gift, and none the less if they defile that which is His Temple, "which Temple they are." Hereby, also, is explained—what otherwise would be inexplicable—how it is that S. Paul in writing to such never instructs them to pray that the HOLY SPIRIT may be given to them. He bids them be filled with the SPIRIT, to walk after the SPIRIT, to bring forth the fruits of the SPIRIT, and to pray in such manner as the Old Testament saints did when His help was sought; but never, to pray that the HOLY GHOST may be given—never in the sense of implying that the Gift was one not yet by them received. In all S. Paul's Epistles there is no prayer, nor any bidding to pray, that they may have the SPIRIT given to them. Praying for the HOLY GHOST to be yet given, especially that belated praying for a new Out-pouring of the HOLY GHOST (a practice so often found, and so much extolled), is quite alien to S. Paul's mind, and subversive of the Gospel as he had received it of the LORD. How should they pray for that which he holds them to have received, and requires of them so emphatically that they likewise should "know" it? He holds them without escape to their responsibility for a gift they have received. This lesson which the Apostle gives is a lesson for "all the days." The

Gift is given, *once for all:* in the answering thereto lies all hope, for them of time past, for us, and for all of Christian-kind.

The HOLY GHOST is now with men, with the members of CHRIST, as CHRIST was with men upon earth — only in a much more intimate manner. He, the SAVIOUR, entered into their company; He sought them; He ate with publicans and sinners and was classed with them— the Holy One with the unholy; He withdrew not Himself from them because they were sinners, He humbled Himself; He taught them, He warned them, He strove with them, and day by day He was grieved at the hardness of their hearts. The HOLY GHOST has now entered into His place. Although the Members of CHRIST He finds us *sinners*, many and often; yea, in measure, all and always. Yet He does His office: for His office verily it is, to strive with, to chide and to warn, to kindle desire, to move, to lead, to inform, and to guide from sin God-wards. And daily is He grieved, slighted, resisted, even by those whom He has "sealed," and "sealed unto the day of redemption." It is His *Humiliation*. As it was CHRIST'S, so now it is His. And He does not withdraw Himself from offence: finding Himself thwarted, He tries again; finding Himself dishonoured, He bears it; finding sin in us, He does not fly from it, no, He fulfils His office: ever striving, ever

inciting, ever prompting and alluring—and that, because He is the SPIRIT of CHRIST; and because also, like CHRIST, He has love for us, the weak creatures of His hand, and now also the Members of CHRIST. He does not take His flight on finding the presence of evil, to return to "the temple" He forsakes, when the evil shall have been cast out. That is not His way. No, He takes hold of our hands, urging us, that we may fight against it. He does not come to solace Himself with our love and with our holy desire: He comes to kindle it and to blow it to a flame, if by striving and waiting long He may.

Do I say, then, He is never finally quenched in any one? I say, in any one who has even *desire* to turn from his sin and be saved, He is not quenched; in any one in whom is any *endeavour*, He is present and working. It is all I say, or can say. If in any one He is finally quenched, Alas for that man! "GOD has departed from him"; He will help him no more! On the matter in general, I say this: No state of sinfulness is any sign that there the HOLY GHOST is not; yea, I would say of it rather, that it carries some assurance that there the Holy One is: for where should the SAVIOUR be but with sinners? the physician, but with the sick? He Who makes holy, but with those Members of CHRIST who have need most so to be made?

I beg you to come to some deeper, truer, more adequate conceptions of the whole work and office of GOD the HOLY GHOST than those which commonly are found. It shall be greatly to your comfort and to your enabling. Greatly also shall it heighten the sense of your responsibility, and the sense of the heinousness of sin indulged. Try, oh try from this day forth to remember, and more and more to realise, that you, every one of you "as many as were baptised," were baptised into CHRIST and were thenceforth His Members; and as surely received the HOLY GHOST for your sanctification alway, as ever you one day knelt to receive the Gift. Where there is no gift, there is no responsibility—that is a heathen state indeed: it is not yours, it never can be yours. But a fearful state is *that*, where, though both are in the account, neither gift given nor responsibility incurred is owned. The last state of that man is worse than the first. While we are yet without CHRIST, CHRIST stands knocking at our door, that we may open and receive Him. Having entered in, if we know Him not nor the Gift of GOD which is by Him for our sanctification—if both are without recognition, then nothing remains for us in life, a life which is speeding on to its end; unless, in the order of GOD's good Providence we be yet brought unto "repentance to the acknowledging of the truth."

## XX.

# Testifying and Pleading.

"My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you."—Gal. iv. 19.

"Until Christ be formed in you." Here, S. Paul, the great Apostle unto us Gentiles, stands, looking onward: with faith rooted in the past; with hope reaching into the future; with present travail, prayer, and pleading—and all with love, towards those whom he calls his "little children."

With him, if now we could stand, we should stand above the many practical difficulties, the sad and heavy trials, the embittered controversies of the day. We should stand in hope like his, in knowledge and faith; and—though the fervency of desire were not unmixed with fear, yet—in perfect mastery of the situation.

For, where is the *incompatibility* of high assurances for the congregation of their being "in Christ" on the one part, and undoubted lack of Christ-like character yet found in so many of

them on the other—if therefrom comes one strong practical sense of urgent need, breaking out in one fervent prayer for them and pleading, "Until CHRIST be formed in you"? And, how the bitter *denials*, and the as stout *affirmations* of Baptismal Grace and Standing claimed for the whole congregation, composed, would sink into silence—never to be heard in such high tones again—if only we could come with faith like S. Paul's: "Ye are all one in CHRIST JESUS," and with travail like his: "Until CHRIST be formed in you." Also, the sad and heavy *trials*—such as every parish priest knows, in respect of many that are unmoved, and many that have motion backward, with loss of faith, and carnality of life—What were they, if only we could bring to their help this sword of the SPIRIT, so sharp it is and double-edged: "Ye are in CHRIST"—giving certain standing; yet all unenriched and poor within—"Until CHRIST be formed in you"?

As GOD shall help me, I shall try to do this latter part. It is a double truth, less two truths than one truth, having double office. As two truths, and they apart, it is not truth at all, and cannot prevail; it must leave you where you are, and such as you are. As two in mutual action, working now the one now the other, and then together with joint effect, it is mighty—mighty through GOD. I don't know one of you whom

thus it might not help. I do know many to whom it would bring a help so great as they have never known before.

Many of you are *standing still* in consequence of doubt: you cannot assure yourselves that you are in CHRIST; you cannot feel that you are in CHRIST. Your sins rise up and hinder; they seem to witness the other way. You do not yet know the truth, the certain truth, that you may have sins and *yet* be in CHRIST—you do not know S. Paul's constant teaching, or you would know it. You have accepted another doctrine, which is not according to his Gospel; and therefore you have never yet received his, nor ever yet been able to receive it.

Now, manifestly, the Corinthians had sins enough, many of them had. He tells them of plenty: he mentions them one by one, and reproves them for each one. And yet, writing to them, and writing of them, he says distinctly, and again and again, in the First, Second and Third Chapters of this his First Epistle, that they are "in CHRIST." It could not possibly be said more distinctly than S. Paul says it. He says, further, that they are the "members of CHRIST"—and it is just because of their sins he says it. He says that their bodies are the "temples of the HOLY GHOST"—and again, it is just because of their sins he says it. He says, in

the Third Chapter, that they are "yet carnal"; and these carnal ones, he says, are "CHRIST'S" and "in CHRIST." He abates something, he says they are "babes in CHRIST." Yet what he abates is not of their *being* in CHRIST—they are just as much in CHRIST as the most spiritual can be; but he says, that being in CHRIST they are babes only: as yet they have come to no fuller stature; their sins have hindered. Now will you any longer say that you have doubt—that it seems to you that you cannot be in CHRIST because you have sins? In GOD'S Name I say it—I hope not!

Then, again, you say that you are not sure of your *faith;* and therefore you doubt whether you are "in CHRIST." And, again I say, you *may* not doubt: you have no right to doubt. Let me ask you a question, by that to help you. Are you sure of the Galatians' faith—those to whom S. Paul wrote the words of my text? S. Paul was not. He doubted very much of their faith. He says he did: writing to them, "I stand in doubt of you," he says; and it was just because of the weakness, the imperfectness of their faith, he said it. And *still* he says, "Ye are all the children of GOD by faith in CHRIST JESUS; for as many of you as have been baptised into CHRIST have put on CHRIST." "In CHRIST JESUS"—in this cardinal article their faith stood firm and good, and therefore he could say it, and did; and

that it might carry the force which reiteration gives, he affirms it yet again in the very next verse, "Ye are all one in CHRIST JESUS." "In CHRIST" they were, S. Paul being witness; even though their faith was not what pleased him, not what it should be—just the contrary.

I seem to be wrestling with you, trying to draw you out of these excuses and unto the acknowledging of the truth. I do; for your help in the Christian life I do it: I want you to believe just what S. Paul says. You are not sure of your faith! Again, *Why?* Even because you have received another doctrine, a doctrine which is not according to S. Paul. S. Paul's doctrine is this of faith, and it is the doctrine of all the Apostles alike: that if you do believe that JESUS is the CHRIST, that He is the SON of GOD, then you have *faith*—faith which is unto salvation. You have this faith. The Galatians had this faith. They spoiled it, indeed, by adding thereto the faith that they could not be justified without observing the Law of Moses. That spoiled it for them: it does not spoil it for you. You have their faith, and have not their spoiling of it, which was threatening to make it vain.

"My little children," he writes, "of whom I travail in birth again until CHRIST be formed in you," "I stand in doubt of you." They were turning away from CHRIST! they were going back

unto the beggarly elements of the Law to seek their justification therein! In like manner—but by another way, that of walking not according to their high calling in CHRIST JESUS—the Corinthians also, to whom he writes: "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in CHRIST." For ye are yet "carnal and walk as men." They were falling into "envying, and strife, and divisions," and every evil work! "My little children" those, "babes in CHRIST" these—both in CHRIST, though there were sins in both; both in CHRIST, though faith was marred, and the graces of the Christian life were lacking. It is your case entirely. "Ye are all sons of GOD, by faith, in CHRIST JESUS; for as many of you as were baptised into CHRIST did put on CHRIST." Again, it is your case entirely. Now—unless you put the word from you—you are *free!* you are at liberty to do what you will in CHRIST in working out your salvation. You may address yourselves to it with perfect assurance: you are admitted unto this grace. You are what the Apostle calls his "little children," and "babes in CHRIST."

Hold that fast.

Now see what it is that he desires for them—it is the main part: but only as you *hold that fast*, can you *receive this*. "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until CHRIST be formed in

you": You are "in CHRIST," but CHRIST is not "formed in you." How great that work is! How much remains yet to be done! "Babes in CHRIST": What is a babe? having hands, it can handle not; having feet it can walk not—it cannot by reason of weakness, by reason of want of use; having ears, it can hear not; having eyes, it can see not—it cannot in the sense of not discerning with knowledge. Every organ is there and is perfect, but use is not perfect. Is it not your case entirely? Again, You are "in CHRIST": but you are "yet carnal and not spiritual." You have to die to the flesh, and to live to the SPIRIT. Being CHRIST'S, you have to put off the old man with his deeds which are corrupt; you have to put on the new man which after GOD is created in righteousness and true holiness. Once more, How great that work is! but, you can do it. All this language implies bit by bit, step by step, day by day. Be of good cheer: accept the day's burden and fight its battles, and soon shall you stand on higher ground and be strong; you shall. Only give diligence, and "carnal" you shall be less and less; "spiritual" you shall be more and more. You shall: only "Be not weary in well-doing"; "Let patience have her perfect work." This is how saints are made. This is how the Apostle trained his "little children."

"Until CHRIST be *formed* in you": and that,

What does it mean? The same thing yet again. You are in CHRIST, in Him as a Member; but CHRIST is not in you—is not "formed" in you. You know how a branch puts on likeness: first it is a bud, it is not formed; but presently it swells, it bursts its shield; day by day it adds a little; it makes a shoot; it puts forth tender leaves; then flowers; then fruit: it is a bud no more; it is a branch, showing after the parent tree. The tree is *in* it, nor is there any part of the tree, except the root, which is not in that branch—once so little, so mean, and so obscure. And thus, the tree is "formed" in it.

So it is. Be you quite sure that so it shall be with you. "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until CHRIST be formed in you." You see, then, what is S. Paul's desire for you, what is his prayer, his pleading; what, after the SPIRIT, is his sore travail. You do; you know your calling, brethren: you have it in a word—"Fulfil ye my joy." Grow in grace, grow in the knowledge and the love of GOD. So shall you be "babes" no more; so shall you come unto "a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of CHRIST." So, too, shall you be "carnal" no more, but "spiritual"; and so shall you be not ashamed in the Day of the LORD JESUS; and ye shall be our crown of rejoicing and our joy.

## XXI.

# Justification by Faith.

"Being justified by faith, we have peace with God."—Rom. v. 1.

IF Conversion need be in no regard (and it was not in any with S. Paul), there is the greater claim to be made for Justification, Justification which is by Faith.[1] The latter has been greatly overshadowed by the former. In popular preaching, as also in tracts which daily appear, showing unto men the Way of Salvation, Conversion has almost entirely taken the place of Justification by faith. The two are confounded together. A scholastic difference may be admitted, yet are Justification and Conversion taken to be—and that by whole bodies of men—to all intents and purposes, one and the same thing. The man who is converted is the man who is justified, the man who is justified is the man who is converted: thus are Justification and Conversion, when in practical bearing, interchangeable terms. S. Paul makes no such confu-

[1] See *Justification by Faith;* 102 pp. (Skeffingtons) from which this Instruction is mainly taken.

sion. Justification he preaches to all, and of all requires; Conversion—in all his Epistles—he makes no mention of. Conversion, as a thing required of baptised people, is quite *foreign* to S. Paul's mind, as also it is to the sense in which he uses words. Baptised people he always accounts to be "in CHRIST," and requires of them that they likewise should "know" it: "in CHRIST" *all*, though many found to be "yet carnal"; and in need of much admonishing, which for their correction the Apostle gives and does not spare. Jews not yet Christian, and Gentiles still heathen, alone are those for whom S. Paul requires the grace of Conversion. In this sense, and in this *only*, does he use the word. It is used by the Apostle—and this is the only instance of its use—in declaring to the Church "the conversion of the Gentiles." What after such conversion as is here indicated, he requires of all is that they stand justified by faith by an ever-continuing surrender of themselves to GOD, in Him believing; and from that, and a subsequent gift of grace (for which *that* is the preparation) from CHRIST received and to them conveyed by its appointed channel, should "go on unto perfection."

Even in the instance of S. Paul *as Saul*, which is ever the favourite and signal example of Conversion, the word is not in New Testament use. Whatever for present value the debt may be, it is

to the Church we owe the rise and sustentation of its use. The Church uses it and brings it into prominence by Festival, that, namely, of "*The Conversion of S. Paul*," and by Collect, that appointed to be used on that day; in which "his wonderful conversion" is made the subject of thankful remembrance, and prayer to GOD is made that we "show forth our thankfulness for the same, by following the holy doctrine which he taught." In the New Testament, Conversion is not found in the sense now so commonly given to it. Along with S. Paul, and in his usage of words, it passes into Justification by Faith; which, in itself, contains in fullest measure the exact meaning which is required, when need is found in the present-day congregation, or in men who are sinners before GOD.

What, then, is *Justification*, Justification *by Faith?* Justification is GOD's immediate response to that inward condition, one of faith, which whosoever hath it is accepted with GOD. It is, on man's part, that surrender to GOD in Him believing, which is ever the value of faith that is *true* faith. It is man's return to his obedience—man's return to the right relation to GOD, which is with pardon and peace. The Prodigal Son, as shown by our LORD in parable, is the example of it. Abraham, as shown in the Epistles (whether in those of S. Paul or in that of S. James) is also

the example of it, when viewed, not in respect of the act of return made, but in respect of the life thenceforth lived—the life of faith, and therefore the life of justification. As seen in the one, the Prodigal Son was justified by faith; as seen in the other, Abraham was justified by faith. In the former is seen *the act*, in the latter is seen *the state*. Both are necessary—necessary with a difference: the state gives value to the act, without which the act ceases to have any; but the state receives no accession of value from the act. The state, when found, and however arising, is complete in itself.

Such justification is for man simply indispensable: without it there is no acceptance with GOD, no pardon, no peace. There is this further necessity: without it there is no Salvation, *that which is in CHRIST*, and is by CHRIST now brought unto men. Justification, in this its meaning, is the one preparation for Salvation. CHRIST can bring salvation only to those who so receive Him, that is, with the surrender of themselves to Him in Him believing. "As many as receive Him, to them gives He the power, 'the right,' to become the sons of GOD, even to them that believe on His Name." "I believe that JESUS is the CHRIST," "I believe that JESUS is the SON of GOD"—unto this faith is "the power," "the right," *given* to become the sons of GOD: this, and all else that is of CHRIST, follows faith in due time and order.

The truth has been further obscured by yet another confusion—one commonly made—which has been and still is a source of great mischief, namely the confusion of Justification with Salvation. These are not one and the same thing, but two things; and two things so distinct the one from the other that they admit of being set in contrast. Justification is the smile of GOD: Salvation is "a *new creature* in CHRIST JESUS." Justification is for all men, and stands solely in their surrender to GOD, in Him believing: Salvation is *only* for men "in CHRIST." Justification—in respect of that upon which it waits—is what GOD requires, and has required of men from the foundation of the world: Salvation is what CHRIST has *brought in*. Justification is that whereby men are prepared to be made partakers: Salvation is that *whereof* they are made the partakers. Justification is by faith only—it cannot be by anything else: Salvation is what from CHRIST is *conveyed* to men on their repenting and believing. Justification is required to be held intact, it is complete from its first moment: Salvation requires, and is required to be "*worked out.*" Justification is a common grace, shared with Jews and heathen: Salvation is a *distinctive* grace, known and open to Christians only. Justification is without respect of creed: Salvation is for those only who receive "*the faith* once (for all) delivered unto the saints." Justifica-

tion has no present respect to Baptism: Salvation is with *immediate* respect thereto—Baptism becomes at once the first command, and is that whereby men "enter" thereupon. Justification stands complete in favour found with GOD: Salvation stands in the new "*life*" we have in CHRIST, "in Him complete"; and is in us sustained only by that which CHRIST, "Who is our life," continues to supply. Justification is that which believing men had with GOD before CHRIST came: Salvation is that "some *better* thing" which they in faith looked forward to and we receive, without which they nor we are "made perfect." Justification is not abated though men should find themselves without the means of grace, and with but little knowledge of GOD'S will: Salvation is not fulfilled "*except*" they are so found, and in use are made availing. From the one we proceed unto the other, and by the other is all "made perfect."

This confusion of Justification with Salvation cleared away, there may now be shown Justification by Faith, and it after a manner which has *better claim* to the name of S. Paul than that to which his name is usually given. The meaning which is commonly attached to the words "Being justified by faith" is not S. Paul's meaning. He does not say 'Having been justified by faith,' he says "*Being* justified by faith, we have peace with

GOD"—requiring for his meaning the present state. "Being justified by faith" is simply the condition precedent of "peace with GOD." The time is the same for both, whether past or present. The Revisers of 1881 acknowledge this. Indeed, a theological necessity compels. No justification which is of the past is of any avail for the present, unless it be sustained in "being." An exact parallel stands at service: "Ye were sanctified"—which is said of all them that "were washed"—invests with no claim to a present personal sanctification; and in them who were so addressed it was not found. It was their need: "Ye are yet carnal," the Apostle says. The truth stands alike for both—for sanctification, also for justification. Always and for all, it is the present condition alone which meets the requirement. A full and completed sense the word admits of only when the faithfulness of GOD is the subject of the predicate —"Whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also *justified;* and whom He justified, them He also glorified"—never when the subject of the predicate is "peace with GOD": this of necessity is dependent on the condition of present faithfulness to grace received; and is so for all alike who bear the Christian Name. And further, in saying "Being justified by faith we have peace with GOD," no reference whatever does the Apostle make to

any one particular event, crisis or experience, as having for some in particular taken place at some one and well remembered moment of time now past; and the same required and to be hoped for by those of the congregation who have not yet experienced the like. In S. Paul's Epistles all instances of use of this word with backward looking are generic, *i.e.*, what is said is said of *the Christian People*, of all the baptised: among whom the Apostle counts those whose salvation is not made sure; who, he says, are "yet carnal"; and whom he bids "be not deceived . . . such were some of you: but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye *were justified* in the Name of the Lord Jesus." A justification which is not shared as S. Paul held justification to be shared, and which may also for the few become the depository of trust even while the graces of the Christian life are lacking, is not that which the Apostle means. Neither S. Paul, nor S. James, nor any other Apostle ever makes mention of anything that is such, whether in possession or as an object of hope.

A past justification—though it were with favour with God, and bore in it the forgiveness of sins—is *none at all* in the sense of being available for present need or trust. Therefore it is that the Apostle never speaks of Justification as something done and over; but always treats of it as being a

present condition, day by day abiding, to be sustained in *being* and kept good by continuance in that which constitutes it. Justification is that gracious acceptance which all meet with on their coming to God believing in Him, and which thenceforth becomes for them the state or condition in which they live. It is, on man's part that return to the Father, in faith, which is at once honoured, and accepted by God at the full value it ever has in His sight—even that unconditional *surrender in faith,* upon which, pardon comes, and blessing is entered into, blessing which is "without money and without price."

'But,' for such blessing, 'How shall I know whether I have made it?' You do not require to know, you require to *make* it. It is (again let it be said) always a thing present, a present state or condition in which man lives, who *lives* at all; a state which never passes, but continues. A past justification is of no force or value whatever. 'Whether I have been justified by faith,' becomes thus a question which is of the least concern; it need never be made a matter whether of thought or care. Such an inquiry, whatever the answer be that duly might be arrived at, is utterly wide of the mark: it is the present *being* of it which alone suffices, or is of any concernment.

In the *other* acceptation of Justification by Faith—that which now is so prevalent—it is

something very different, something which for reach and value is infinitely less. As commonly held and taught, men see in justification an act, an *event*—which, taking place in and by an act of faith, is unto salvation, and for salvation is required to take place; attended oftentimes by much struggle, much calling upon GOD and wrestling with Him. Attained to, won, if haply it be won (for many, alas, thus press and wait, to whom no door opens) it is for comfort evermore. 'Struggle,' 'press,' 'wrestling with GOD'—the words tell at once of the mistake, the profound mistake, that is made. The struggle, if struggle there be, lies all on the other side of the count, with one's own self, not with GOD. It is that struggle which the child knows, in pain and torture of heart, when on the verge of a surrender not yet made. With surrender the struggle ends. The picture (well known) of one, 'a poor sinner,' kept long by Him waiting, pleading with GOD and praying, is essentially a false one. The 'wrestling' *needed* is with one's self, with calling upon GOD for aid in this sometimes sore strife. Do but give yourself up to the Divine call and claim — trust yourself wholly to Him, in faith believing; and that is done and brought unto effect which, as an act, has no further existence, even as a point which is the beginning of a line has none. This is Justification by Faith as a pre-

sent *condition;* and justification is of value only as being such.

Contrariwise, men for justification, pardon and peace with GOD, proclaim an act, a past act or event; which, even if found in the record of life, is nothing unless now found and counts for nothing. Regarded as an *act*—having value in itself—it is with *difficulty*. With difficulty of understanding: men perplexed know not the manner nor the nature of it; know not whether they have with sureness entered upon it; know not how they may make sure. With difficulty also in respect of power, the power they have and require to have to make it and blessings by it their own. It is not (as they well know) without struggle and striving. In the case of many, again and again, when 'under conviction' it has been sought; again and again, it has eluded them: defeated often, they have fallen back; and for some, despair now takes the place of struggle. But, regarded as a *condition*, it is with *ease*. With ease of understanding—that which even a child has, because it is the law which GOD so early writes in the hearts of children, as towards father and mother. With ease, again, in respect of power: for children *do* find power, after the little struggle which goes on in themselves, to end it; do, in fact, so soon as they become *willing*, enter into blessing which is blessing indeed—the state

of trusting, loving obedience. They do this by faith, faith in their parents. What is this in them, but that which S. Paul points out to us, defining faith—which is unto justification—as being "faith which worketh by love"?

Admitting that to be true which is so often heard, 'You cannot force faith,' it is true only in such manner as that you cannot force love; and, of both it is true neither less nor more in the Divine sphere than it is in that which has relation to father and mother. In either, the difficulty is of small account. If only you *will* it, then is it already there; the state, the condition is found, to be and to go on from this small—but, indeed, *great*—beginning with certain and sure increase.

GOD's requirement of man is man's return to Him, in full surrender, with acceptance of His will. This can only be by *faith*, the faith which a man brings thereto, in trust and believing in GOD; even as Abraham, who in S. Paul's writings is the favourite example of it, believed in GOD. Thus it becomes for a man a *state* or *condition*, that in which he lives, as for Abraham it was. And thus the beginning passes out of sight, as again in Abraham it did: the point passes into a line, and in the line becomes lost. The point is nothing, considered as a thing of present value, the line is everything—it takes the point into itself, and

thence proceeding ends not with time, nor with eternity, but only in GOD.

This blessed consummation of it is *dependent*, not on any definition of faith given and received. A man may be very vague in his ideas or notions about faith, being even "a wayfaring man," "whose talk is of bullocks"; and he unable to give any account of justification or of "the hope that is within him," and yet—the end, the same blessed end reached. But the due recognition of what alone is *essentially* of requirement, is of unspeakable value to the man who is ever raking up a past act, and tormenting himself with the question as to whether that act of faith which *once* he made was the right one, the one which for salvation is required; as also it is (or should be) for the man who is resting his salvation on an act by him remembered, to which he assigns a place and a day. They both should know, that justification stands on no past act, but wholly on *a present condition;* and, that faith, which is unto justification, stands not in its being understood, nor in its being that which accurately answers to some human definition, but only and solely in its own *being*—that, namely, of a present surrender to the will and love of GOD.

## XXII.

# "The Church in the Wilderness" our "Ensamples."

"I would not that ye should be ignorant."—1 Cor. x. 1-11.

WERE there not another word written; or, If all—save these eleven verses—of what S. Paul wrote to the Churches were debarred from bearing witness, there would still be in them found a revelation to the congregation, and to each individual member of the congregation, of that which most of all it behoves them every one to know, and to be assured of, namely, that *their standing before God is a standing in grace;* a standing in grace, and in salvation common to all, "the Lord having saved them."[1]

Was S. Paul a false witness? Did he lie for Christ? Let it only be allowed that this witness is a true witness, that he taught "the truth as it

[1] The present writer is not sure to what extent or in what part this Instruction may not be the work of another. It has passed beyond verification.

is in JESUS," and nothing can destroy or even obscure the truth—for all who will receive it—that the standing of the whole congregation is a standing *in grace*. Quite independent of present personal character and all considerations therefrom arising; quite independent of such considerations as, Who shall be saved at length, whether all, or many, or few? this position is taken, and held, and roundly affirmed, in words clear beyond cavil, of the congregation—that all are partakers *in common* of Grace and Standing; all are assured thereof, and may be assured.

Nay, it is S. Paul's first care, his first solicitous care, that of this they should *hold* themselves assured: "I would not that ye should be ignorant" or unknowing, he says. That would be bad for them. It would not be good for them to account themselves as being out of CHRIST and not called, out of grace and without standing before GOD; it would be exceedingly bad for them. "Know ye not?" "What, do ye not know?" "I would not that ye should be ignorant." Ignorant of what? Why, that all our fathers stood in grace, while not all received the prize. That, precisely, is the lesson which these verses carry—the point which S. Paul would drive home, as a nail in a sure place.

But there is an emphatic word; there is an emphasis placed on one, quite uncommon, even

with S. Paul, which makes it all the more remarkable. S. Paul lived before these days of red letters, and big capitals, and repeated underlinings; but by a five-timed repetition he brings out the emphatic word *all*: "All our fathers were under the cloud," "all passed through the sea," "and were all baptised unto Moses," "and did all eat the same spiritual meat," "and did all drink the same spiritual drink." Thus—putting them in remembrance how GOD wrought for His people of old, and how He saved them with a mighty arm—he comes before the people of GOD *now*, even all the whole congregation, and testifies of them that the saving was of *all*, that all are partakers, that all have standing in Grace. Unless the parallel holds good here, it holds good nowhere—it fails utterly. For this is the very lesson—the very intent of the showing: all stood in grace, while not all received the prize.

Men will be foolish enough—I know they will—to try to break the force of this: they will say it was a *temporal* salvation that is spoken of. Well, what if it was? And yet they are not exact: it was so only in part. And still is not the truth broken were it only a temporal salvation: for S. Paul applies it (even as S. Jude also does) to our eternal salvation, our salvation by CHRIST. He applies it to us; and tells us that what was the truth for them, the Jews, in a by-gone age, is the

truth now, for us Christians; and that none the less because we look not for an earthly Canaan but a heavenly. The one truth with which the Apostle is concerned, and with which he would hold us concerned, is, that all had their Standing in Grace while not all entered in because of unbelief.

Now remember who it was that S. Paul certifies on this wise. This Epistle is the Epistle to the Corinthians. Read the first six Chapters and you will see enough: of them, many were "carnal"; "walking as men," in contentions, envyings and strife; wronging one another, defrauding one another; falling into divers sins, even fornication among the rest, and not mourning, but rather, puffed up. Manifestly, if the parallel stands good of them to whom it was first addressed, it stands good anywhere, and stands good now.

And note where it is made to begin: not in GOD'S eternal purpose; not in His raising up to them a Deliverer, a Saviour; it is made to begin in the actual *passage* from the Egypt of their bondage into a state which was a state of salvation, that they may go free, and that His people may serve Him. And this is made—here made—identical in time and act with their *baptism* "in the cloud and in the sea." Our deliverance, if it be a parallel, is then identical in time and act with our Baptism, our baptism into CHRIST.

For, note yet further: S. Paul actually borrows the language of the Christian Sacraments in order to set forth this, and to make the parallel appear. The Jewish Congregation—it may be said—were not conscious of anything which might for *them* be called a 'baptism unto Moses,' as, led by the cloud of the Divine Presence, they passed through the sea. They were not conscious, as they ate the manna which GOD rained upon them from above, that they were eating "spiritual meat"; it was spiritual, only in the sense of being supernatural. They were not conscious, as they drank of the water which flowed for them from the smitten rock, that "that rock" which yielded this spiritual drink "was CHRIST." "For our sakes this is written": it is written for the Congregation of the Christian People, that the parallel may be a parallel, and that "for our admonition" it may duly appear.

The language is of us rather than it is of them. *We* are they that are all led out of the Egypt of the flesh under the guiding cloud of GOD'S Presence; *we* are they that are all baptised not indeed unto Moses, but into CHRIST Whom Moses prefigured; *we* are they that do all eat the same spiritual meat, and do all drink the same spiritual drink. And the Apostle, by showing it of them in whom it was less true, and true only as a type or "ensample," shows it of us in whom

it is much more true, even true as a type fulfilled. In their case, *all were partakers;* all shared equally and in like manner: in our case also, all are partakers; all are receivers of the same grace. So it is written—written in this same chapter, a few verses further on: "The Cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the Communion of the Blood of CHRIST? The Bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of CHRIST? For we, being many, are one Body and one Bread, for we are *all partakers* of that one Bread." He Who yielded it for them, His People of old, He from Whom it flowed for their refreshment, was CHRIST. This same it is Who furnishes it for us. Only, that which was for them in figure, is for us in truth: "Moses gave you not that bread from Heaven, but My Father giveth you the true Bread from Heaven"; "Not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead"—"This is the Bread which cometh down from Heaven, that ye may eat thereof and not die." They were a Sacramental Host, whom GOD led out of Egypt by the way of the Red Sea, and sustained them in the wilderness by bread from heaven to eat; We, also, are a Sacramental Host, whom GOD leads out of the house of our bondage by the water of Baptism into CHRIST, and sustains in the wilderness by the True Bread which cometh down from Heaven.

But the Apostle makes a further statement

whereby to clinch the matter, and to make doubly sure. "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come." This is S. Paul's language. They were "figures," he says, in which we may see ourselves and be warned; they were "types" showing the outer form: in us the same things are fulfilled.

You must remember—all the whole Congregation must remember—that it is of *all*, that these things are written; and then the needful lessons will follow duly and be lessons for us—and else, they will not.

They who sinned, they who were carnal, they who lusted after evil things, they who tempted CHRIST, they who murmured and were disobedient—and in all this were our "ensamples," the exact "types" of many—they, equally with the rest had *entered upon "the common salvation,"* and were sharers in the same grace. Just so it is again, as these Corinthians show; it is so among us. It is so, or the parallel does not hold. It is so, or the truth cannot come home: for *their* sinning, and their lusting after evil things, was not as the sinning of others, the nations round about; their sins were against grace, against Grace and Calling; their sin was in dishonour of GOD more than that of other men, whom the LORD had not delivered; their sin was more heinous, it was sin exceeding.

Just so it is again; it is so among us. And, notwithstanding their sin, they were GOD'S people; even while they sinned they were GOD'S people: they continued His, His as they were before—His people, rebellious; His children, undutiful. And so is taught the goodness of GOD: He bare with their provocations, and with their manners in the wilderness; chastening and correcting them—as a father his son in whom he delighteth—striving with them; turning them over unto the will of their enemies, so that trouble came, and when they cried unto Him in their distress, then turning to them again.

Destroy the parallel in its leading point, deny or ignore that all, *all*, have entered upon salvation, all are partakers, partakers in the same grace, and you destroy the parallel throughout: you then make void all this great truth—that their sins are against grace, that such is the goodness of GOD which endureth yet daily.

Still, there are other lessons, this among the number: We read not of their sins while yet they were in Egypt, we read of their bondage to another master; if their service fell short it was their service of him. We read not of their temptations there, abiding by the flesh-pots they were not tempted toward them; they had what the flesh desired. Saved, they were saved that they should no longer serve in that service; that they should

not lust after the evil things. Yet, no sooner had GOD saved them, no sooner were they delivered, than temptations began, for the flesh lusted against the spirit. It was strife and warfare to which they were called, not rest and victory. And often, alas, often! they were unfaithful, unfaithful to their calling, and in their hearts turned back again. So it is again; so it is of us. Strife, not ease; warfare, not rest from our enemies, is that to which we are called. Now temptations, which beset us sore; now the presence of sin, and the knowledge of sin as we never knew it before: to all this we are come, that we may subdue our enemies, enemies without on every hand, yea, and greater enemies within. Alas, that some in their hearts should go back! Alas, too, that some should sit down and bemoan themselves, knowing neither their calling nor the grace in which they stand! As a trumpet call, the voice comes to us as it came once before to them who are our "ensamples"—"Wherefore criest thou unto Me? Speak unto the children of Israel *that they go forward.*"

And now our last lesson: Know—let all the congregation know—that those who sin, and those who corrupt themselves, and those who turn not from their evil way, GOD, after much forbearance and great longsuffering, will destroy; even as He destroyed them who herein were our ensamples: their carcases fell in the wilderness;

they came not unto that good land, the which GOD had promised them. Truly they were the inheritors of it; and if they had been mindful, the LORD would have brought them in. Truly He was faithful Who promised. But continuing unfaithful they fell, and forfeited, what else was a sure possession. And, said the LORD, "They shall know My breach of promise." This was the end of as many as were disobedient: "they entered not in because of unbelief."

"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world have come." "I would not that ye should be ignorant." It is not the teaching of S. Paul alone: another says, and he also an Apostle of our LORD and Master, "I will therefore put you in remembrance, though once ye knew this, how that the LORD, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not."

It is the teaching required by this age, yea, perhaps by every age; yet especially by this, since in this it has been so prevailingly denied: therefore the word of S. Paul is the more apt, "I would not that ye should be ignorant," or unknowing.

## XXIII.

# The Church Catholic a Faithful Witness.

"Testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand."—1 S. Peter v. 12.

THAT which was "the doctrine of the Apostles," when "all continued stedfastly in" it, That which (in respect of one great matter) was the teaching of the Apostles—especially of S. Paul, the Apostle to us Gentiles, brought by him to bear upon all the Churches under his care, and upon all the members thereof, severally and individually, in so many Epistles—took such hold upon the Church, that the relations to Christ and to each other, held and confessed, are found to have been evermore *the same*, in all the Churches that have come down to us, however diverse in other respects they be or differing one from another.

What these relations are, is set forth affirmatively in two words, and they addressed to the entire Congregation: "Now ye are the Body of

CHRIST and members in particular"; "For by one SPIRIT are we all baptised into one Body." How this truth is found embedded in the English *Book of Common Prayer;* how it enters into its very structure, and leads in every Office, there is the Prayer Book to show. There is not needed another witness. And this our own, is only one example out of many; for *all* Books of the old historic Churches of Christendom, whether for the use of priests or people, follow exactly on the same lines, in respect of this same matter.

Calvin was the first to find another base. He laid it in GOD'S fore-knowledge, in predestination and particular election, and in irresistible grace. The Nonconformists followed Calvin: with scarcely an exception, they did so at first. But Calvinism is dead.

John Wesley—therein following Luther and certain Moravian teachers—accepted yet another base: a sensible Conversion, to be prayed for and to be wrestled for till won, was the base accepted. And so hotly was this pressed by the preachers of it—baptised or unbaptised, on all alike—that John Wesley, reviewing it in his after years, says mournfully, "I wonder that the people did not stone us."

Between two such fires, and with no more than a half-hearted belief in her own inherited doctrine (and sometimes not that) the Church fared badly.

*Her* base was neither that of Calvin and the earlier Noncomformists—Election unto life for "so many" as GOD foreknew and did predestinate; nor that of the Methodist after Luther and of the later Nonconformists—Grace and Calling for "as many" as passed through the throes of a sensible conversion: but *this*, after S. Paul—"So many of us as were baptised into JESUS CHRIST were baptised into His death"; "As many of you as were baptised into CHRIST did put on CHRIST"—and this applied, as the same Apostle ever applied it, to the entire Congregation, the congregation accounted as consisting of all the persons baptised, and not of any other. This, her base, is owned and acknowledged all through the Epistles—those especially of S. Paul—and has there its application to all to whom those Epistles were addressed, *i.e.*, to the baptised and not to any other, the "spiritual" and the "carnal," to all alike and in common. Thus, "As ye have received CHRIST JESUS the LORD, so walk ye in Him; rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught"; "But now ye also put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another; *seeing that* ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him."

A standing in Grace, "in CHRIST," "members of CHRIST," "temples of the HOLY GHOST," is what is declared, and declared of all; but the prize of our high calling in CHRIST JESUS our LORD, only to those who run, who give heed, who give diligence, all diligence, to finish their course with joy. This double witness is what all alike are held in remembrance of: "Do ye not know?" again and again, it is demanded; "What! do ye not know?" They did know; and were not, as he "would not that they should be, ignorant." And in their knowing this lay their safety: "Wherefore, I will not be negligent," says one Apostle, "to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them"; and, says another Apostle, "I will therefore put you in remembrance, though once ye knew this, how that the LORD having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not," or, "were disobedient."

But, what if "the people" among us—"the LORD having saved" them—did *not* know! What, if the pastors, having charge given them, were "negligent," and did not put them "in remembrance"! What, if pastors and people both turned aside after Calvin—and Calvin dead, is not more dead than the things that are of Calvin! What, if others, preachers and people, turned aside after Conversion—and a Conversion not so

much as named by the Apostle, nor ever once preached by him in the Congregation!

Still the things written are there. Not only in the Epistles—priests and people must have read *them* "negligently"—but, in the Prayer Book as well, which they could never use without some reminding of it. Let us see. Beginning at the beginning, Of every child baptised, the priest says before GOD and the Congregation, "this child is regenerate"—"with Thy HOLY SPIRIT" regenerate—"and grafted into the Body of CHRIST'S Church"; and "let us give thanks unto Almighty GOD for these benefits," "and with one accord make our prayers unto Him, that this child may lead the rest of his life according to this beginning." Taught the Catechism, he is led by them to say, "In my Baptism, wherein I was made a member of CHRIST, the child of GOD, and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven." Brought to be Confirmed, the Bishop makes prayer to GOD for him, and for others such, saying, "Almighty and Everlasting GOD, Who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these Thy servants by Water and the HOLY GHOST, and hast given unto them forgiveness of all their sins." And every year, on Christmas Day and during the seven days after, the grace in which the Congregation stands, is referred continually to that same beginning: "Grant that we, being regenerate, and made Thy children by

adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by Thy HOLY SPIRIT."—No other base for it is found. Such is the language put into their mouths, and such is all the rest.

It is not, as it is sometimes said to be, that the language of the Prayer Book is high-pitched: it is not that at all; it *must* be such as it is. Never was there a service drawn up which did not imply covenant relationship with God in the users of it: just as in the New Testament is no part found which is not written for Christians, and for Christians only. Only one who is "in CHRIST," can take to himself what S. Paul has written in any single Epistle; only one who by Baptism has "put on CHRIST" can apply to himself even so much as its admonitions.

Now we come to the Congregation in church assembled, of which he (the aforesaid person) being Confirmed, is a member in full standing. He and all kneel down together, for confession of sins, for absolution, and to say 'Our Father.' He and all say all that is to be said. No voice, being that of the baptised, is under restraint. No voice is heard more than another, or has more than another right to be heard. In Holy Communion all have equal access: all are warned, and all are bidden. The children's Bread is for all, for all are children. (The Church knows how to guard her Holy Mysteries, if need arise; even as

S. Paul knew how.) Leaving the Congregation for awhile, two of these come to be married, and it is as children of GOD they come: as children of GOD they enter into this holy Mystery, "that they may keep themselves undefiled *members of CHRIST'S Body*." Nor does the Church omit to say, "It is convenient that the newly married persons should receive the Holy Communion at the time of their marriage, or at the first opportunity after their marriage." Every woman who comes to be 'Churched' and to give her thanks, comes only by virtue of this same relation; and is spoken of before GOD, as "this woman Thy servant, who putteth her trust in Thee": "And if there be a Communion, it is convenient that she receive the Holy Communion," so again does the rubric say. "When any person is sick," the same language is heard once more: "This Thy servant who putteth his trust in Thee." And the first thing done after prayer is to put him *in remembrance:* "I exhort you, therefore, in the Name of GOD, to remember the profession which you made unto GOD in your Baptism"; and he is examined in his faith and moved to repentance for his sins: but as a child of GOD it is throughout that he is addressed, and never as any other. No other base than that which is constituted by Baptism is recognised, no other being known. When prayer again is made, it is, "*Renew* in him,

most loving Father, *whatsoever hath been decayed* by the fraud and malice of the devil, or by his own carnal will and frailness." Yet forasmuch as his soul may be full of trouble by reason of his former sins that now possess him, he is first moved, "if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter, to make a special confession of his sins," "after which Confession (if he humbly and heartily desire it) the priest," so runs the direction, "shall absolve him."

Thus, from first to last, from birth to burial day, all, being baptised, are counted as Christians, are dealt with as Christians. Provision is not made for any other, nor *can* be made. All others, are remembered by name, in prayer apart: as in the Good Friday Service, when we intercede for them—for all "Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Heretics." And while we pray for them, that *they* may be converted and brought home to CHRIST'S flock, we confess of ourselves—above all, we confess it on that day—that *we* are "vile earth and miserable sinners," and nevertheless are of CHRIST'S flock, "His people," and "the sheep of His pasture."

All who die, being baptised into CHRIST, are acknowledged as her members, held answerable for grace received, and are in this character committed in faith and hope unto a just and pitying Judge to await His coming.

But, perhaps, that Direction which finds place immediately after the Office of Holy Communion—"And *note*, that every parishioner" (being baptised, as is always assumed) "shall communicate at the least three times in the year, of which Easter shall be one"—is the witness which is most signal. It seems like a survival: and a survival it undoubtedly is, showing—bearing witness to—the unbroken faith of Christendom, before the subversions of the 16th Century—faith till then never denied, and in none of the old historic Churches denied to this day: that the "baptised into CHRIST" are "in CHRIST," responsible to GOD for Grace and Calling. A faith and teaching which is found in every *form*, even in that of rebuke, in the open Letters of S. Paul, addressed by him to the Churches in all lands: and not only then true, but now true, and to remain true for evermore.

The other teaching—*that* which denies unto those of the congregation who are found "carnal" and "not spiritual"; who have to be reproved for their erring faith, who even when their faith stands good have yet to add thereto the graces S. Peter names; who have yet to put off the old man which is corrupt and to put on the new man, as S. Paul bids; and whose salvation has yet to be worked out—which denies the being "in CHRIST" unto those of the congregation who are such and so

found—is a teaching which is not of the Apostles, neither by the Apostles, but is of men.

May the truth, by whomsoever preached, live: May the teaching which subverts it perish for evermore.

THE END.

*Printed by Curtis & Beamish, Ltd., Coventry.*

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